

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Prologue

*Enter CHORUS**The CHORUS enters.***CHORUS**

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

*Exit***CHORUS**

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

*The CHORUS exits.*

## Act 1, Scene 1

*Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY of the house of Capulet, with swords and bucklers**SAMPSON and GREGORY, servants of the Capulet family, enter carrying swords and small shields.***SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

No, for then we should be colliers.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

5 I strike quickly, being moved.

**GREGORY**

But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

**SAMPSON**

A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

I hit hard when I'm angry.

**GREGORY**

But it's hard to make you angry.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

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## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 2

**GREGORY**

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

**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.

**GREGORY**

The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

The heads of the maids?

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

25 They must take it in sense that feel it.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

*Enter ABRAM and another SERVINGMAN*

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

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

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

Cut off their heads? You mean their [maidenheads](#)?

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

The women you rape are the ones who'll have to "sense" it.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

It's a good thing you're not a piece of fish. You're [dried and shriveled](#) like salted fish.

*ABRAM and another servant of the Montagues enter.*

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

**SAMPSON**

I have my naked sword out. Fight, I'll back you up.

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 3

**GREGORY**

How? Turn thy back and run?

**SAMPSON**

Fear me not.

**GREGORY**

No, marry. I fear thee.

**SAMPSON**

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

**GREGORY**

How will you back me up—by turning your back and running away?

**SAMPSON**

Don't worry about me.

**GREGORY**

No, really. I *am* worried about you!

**SAMPSON**

Let's not break the law by starting a fight. Let

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

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

**ABRAM**  
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

**SAMPSON**  
I do bite my thumb, sir.

**ABRAM**  
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

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

**GREGORY**  
(*aside to SAMPSON*)  
No.

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

**GREGORY**  
45 Do you quarrel, sir?

**ABRAM**  
Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 4

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

**ABRAM**  
No better.

**SAMPSON**  
Well, sir.

*Enter BENVOLIO*

**GREGORY**  
50 (*aside to SAMPSON*) Say “better.” Here comes one of my master’s kinsmen.

**SAMPSON**  
(*to ABRAM*) Yes, better, sir.

**ABRAM**  
You lie.

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

*They fight*

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them start something.

**GREGORY**  
I'll frown at them as they pass by, and they can react however they want.

**SAMPSON**  
You mean however they dare. I'll bite my thumb at them. That's an insult, and if they let me get away with it they'll be dishonored. (*SAMPSON bites his thumb*)

**ABRAM**  
Hey, are you biting your thumb at us?

**SAMPSON**  
I'm biting my thumb.

**ABRAM**  
Are you biting your thumb at us?

**SAMPSON**  
(*aside to GREGORY*) Is the law on our side if I say yes?

**GREGORY**  
(*aside to SAMPSON*) No.

**SAMPSON**  
(*to ABRAM*) No, sir, I'm not biting my thumb at you, but I am biting my thumb.

**GREGORY**  
Are you trying to start a fight?

**ABRAM**  
Start a fight? No, sir.

**SAMPSON**  
If you want to fight, I'm your man. My employer is as good as yours.

**ABRAM**  
But he's not better than mine.

**SAMPSON**  
Well then.

*BENVOLIO enters.*

**GREGORY**  
(*speaking so that only SAMPSON can hear*) Say “better.” Here comes one of my employer's relatives.

**SAMPSON**  
(*to ABRAM*) Yes, “better,” sir.

**ABRAM**  
You lie.

**SAMPSON**  
Pull out your swords, if you're men. Gregory, remember how to slash.

*They fight.*

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**BENVOLIO**

*(draws his sword)* Part, fools!

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

*Enter TYBALT*

**TYBALT**

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

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 5

**BENVOLIO**

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

**TYBALT**

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

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

**CITIZENS**

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

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

**CAPULET**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

*Enter old MONTAGUE and his wife, LADY  
MONTAGUE*

**CAPULET**

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

**MONTAGUE**

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

**LADY MONTAGUE**

70 Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 6

*Enter PRINCE ESCALUS, with his train*

**PRINCE**

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel!—

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**BENVOLIO**

*(pulling out his sword)* Break it up, you fools. Put  
your swords away. You don't know what you're  
doing.

*TYBALT enters.*

**TYBALT**

What? You've pulled out your sword to fight with  
these worthless servants? Turn around, Benvolio,  
and look at the man who's going to kill you.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**TYBALT**

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

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

**CITIZENS**

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

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

**CAPULET**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

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

**CAPULET**

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

**MONTAGUE**

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

**LADY MONTAGUE**

You're not taking one step toward an enemy.

*PRINCE ESCALUS enters with his escort.*

**PRINCE**

*(shouting at the rioters)* You rebels! Enemies of  
the peace! Men who turn their weapons against

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Will they not hear?—What, ho! You men, you beasts,  
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage  
75 With purple fountains issuing from your veins,  
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands  
Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground,  
And hear the sentence of your movèd prince.  
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,  
80 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,  
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets  
And made Verona's ancient citizens  
Cast by their grave-beseeming ornaments,  
To wield old partisans in hands as old,  
85 Cankered with peace, to part your cankered hate.  
If ever you disturb our streets again,  
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.  
For this time, all the rest depart away.  
You, Capulet, shall go along with me,  
90 And, Montague, come you this afternoon  
To know our farther pleasure in this case,  
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.  
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

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

**MONTAGUE**

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

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

*Everyone exits except MONTAGUE, LADY  
MONTAGUE, and BENVOLIO.*

**MONTAGUE**

Who started this old fight up again? Speak,  
nephew. Were you here when it started?

**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 7****BENVOLIO**

Here were the servants of your adversary,  
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach.  
I drew to part them. In the instant came  
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,  
100 Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,  
He swung about his head and cut the winds,  
Who, nothing hurt withal, hissed him in scorn.  
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,  
Came more and more and fought on part and part,  
105 Till the Prince came, who parted either part.

**LADY MONTAGUE**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Your servants were fighting your enemy's  
servants before I got here. I drew my sword to  
part them. Right then, that hothead Tybalt  
showed up with his sword ready. He taunted me  
and waved his sword around, making the air  
hiss. As we were trading blows, more and more  
people showed up to join the fight, until the  
Prince came and broke everyone up.

**LADY MONTAGUE**

Oh, where's Romeo? Have you seen him today?  
I'm glad he wasn't here for this fight.

**BENVOLIO**

Madam, I had a lot on my mind an hour before  
dawn this morning, so I went for a walk.  
Underneath the Sycamore grove that grows on  
the west side of the city, I saw your son taking an  
early-morning walk. I headed toward him, but he  
saw me coming and hid in the woods. I thought  
he must be feeling the same way I was—wanting  
to be alone and tired of his own company. I  
figured he was avoiding me, and I was perfectly  
happy to leave him alone and keep to myself.

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Being one too many by my weary self,  
 120 Pursued my humor not pursuing his,  
 And gladly shunned who gladly fled from me.

**MONTAGUE**

Many a morning hath he there been seen,  
 With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,  
 Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs.  
 But all so soon as the all-cheering sun  
 125 Should in the farthest east begin to draw  
 The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,  
 Away from light steals home my heavy son,

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 8

And private in his chamber pens himself,  
 Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,  
 130 And makes himself an artificial night.  
 Black and portentous must this humor prove  
 Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

**BENVOLIO**

My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

**MONTAGUE**

I neither know it nor can learn of him.

**BENVOLIO**

135 Have you importuned him by any means?

**MONTAGUE**

Both by myself and many other friends.  
 But he, his own affections' counselor,  
 Is to himself—I will not say how true,  
 But to himself so secret and so close,  
 140 So far from sounding and discovery,  
 As is the bud bit with an envious worm,  
 Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,  
 Or dedicate his beauty to the same.  
 Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow.  
 145 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.

**MONTAGUE**

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

*Exeunt MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE*

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 9

**BENVOLIO**

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**MONTAGUE**

He's been seen there many mornings, crying  
 tears that add drops to the morning dew and  
 making a cloudy day cloudier with his sighs. But  
 as soon as the sun rises in the east, my sad son  
 comes home to escape the light.

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MONTAGUE**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MONTAGUE**

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

*ROMEO enters.*

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MONTAGUE**

I hope you're lucky enough to hear the true story  
 by sticking around. *(to his wife)* Come, madam,  
 let's go.

*MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE exit.*

**BENVOLIO**

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- 150 Good morrow, cousin.  
**ROMEO**  
 Is the day so young?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 But new struck nine.  
**ROMEO**  
 Ay me! Sad hours seem long.  
 Was that my father that went hence so fast?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?  
  
**ROMEO**  
 Not having that which, having, makes them short.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 155 In love?  
**ROMEO**  
 Out.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 Of love?  
**ROMEO**  
 Out of her favor, where I am in love.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,  
 160 Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!  
**ROMEO**  
 Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,  
 Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!  
 Where shall we dine?—O me! What fray was here?  
 Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.  
 165 Here's much to do with hate but more with love.  
 Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate,  
 O anything of nothing first created!  
 O heavy lightness, serious vanity,  
 Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms!  
 170 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,  
 Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!  
 This love feel I, that feel no love in this.  
 Dost thou not laugh?

## Modern Text

- Good morning, cousin.  
**ROMEO**  
 Is it that early in the day?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 It's only just now nine o'clock.  
**ROMEO**  
 Oh my, time goes by slowly when you're sad.  
 Was that my father who left here in such a hurry?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 It was. What's making you so sad and your hours  
 so long?  
**ROMEO**  
 I don't have the thing that makes time fly.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 You're in love?  
**ROMEO**  
 Out.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 Out of love?  
**ROMEO**  
 I love someone. She doesn't love me.  
**BENVOLIO**  
 It's sad. Love looks like a nice thing, but it's  
 actually very rough when you experience it.  
**ROMEO**  
 What's sad is that love is supposed to be blind,  
 but it can still make you do whatever it wants.  
 So, where should we eat? (*seeing blood*) Oh my!  
 What fight happened here? No, don't tell me—I  
 know all about it. This fight has a lot to do with  
 hatred, but it has more to do with love. O  
 brawling love! O loving hate! Love that comes  
 from nothing! Sad happiness! Serious  
 foolishness! Beautiful things muddled together  
 into an ugly mess! Love is heavy and light, bright  
 and dark, hot and cold, sick and healthy, asleep  
 and awake—it's everything except what it is! This  
 is the love I feel, though no one loves me back.  
 Are you laughing?

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 10

- BENVOLIO**  
 No, coz, I rather weep.  
**ROMEO**  
 Good heart, at what?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 175 At thy good heart's oppression.  
**ROMEO**  
 Why, such is love's transgression.  
 Grievings of mine own lie heavy in my breast,  
 Which thou wilt propagate, to have it pressed
- BENVOLIO**  
 No, cousin, I'm crying.  
**ROMEO**  
 Good man, why are you crying?  
**BENVOLIO**  
 I'm crying because of how sad you are.  
**ROMEO**  
 Yes, this is what love does. My sadness sits  
 heavy in my chest, and you want to add your  
 own sadness to mine so there's even more. I

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With more of thine. This love that thou hast shown  
 180 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.  
 Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;  
 Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;  
 Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears.  
 What is it else? A madness most discreet,  
 185 A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.  
 Farewell, my coz.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

190 Tell me in sadness, who is that you love.

**ROMEO**

What, shall I groan and tell thee?

**BENVOLIO**

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

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 11

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

**ROMEO**

She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste,

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have too much sadness already, and now you're  
 going to make me sadder by feeling sorry for  
 you. Here's what love is: a smoke made out of  
 lovers' sighs. When the smoke clears, love is a  
 fire burning in your lover's eyes. If you frustrate  
 love, you get an ocean made out of lovers' tears.  
 What else is love? It's a wise form of madness.  
 It's a sweet lozenge that you choke on.  
 Goodbye, cousin.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Tell me seriously, who is the one you love?

**ROMEO**

Seriously? You mean I should groan and tell  
 you?

**BENVOLIO**

Groan? No. But tell me seriously who it is.

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

So she's made a vow to be a virgin forever?

**ROMEO**

Yes she has, and by keeping celibate, she



## Original Text

- 210 For beauty, starved 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.  
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow  
215 Do I live dead that live to tell it now.

**BENVOLIO**

Be ruled by me. Forget to think of her.

**ROMEO**

O, teach me how I should forget to think!

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 12

**BENVOLIO**

By giving liberty unto thine eyes.  
Examine other beauties.

**ROMEO**

'Tis the way

- 220 To call hers exquisite, in question more.  
These happy masks that kiss fair ladies' brows,  
Being black, puts us in mind they hide the fair.  
He that is stricken blind cannot forget  
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost.  
225 Show me a mistress that is passing fair;  
What doth her beauty serve but as a note  
Where I may read who passed that passing fair?  
Farewell. Thou canst not teach me to forget.

**BENVOLIO**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

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

**BENVOLIO**

Take my advice. Don't think about her.

**ROMEO**

Teach me to forget to think!

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

*They exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 2

*Enter CAPULET, County PARIS, and PETER, a servant*

**CAPULET**

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

**PARIS**

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

**CAPULET**

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

**PARIS**

*CAPULET enters with County PARIS, followed by PETER, a servant.*

**CAPULET**

*(continuing a conversation)* But Montague has sworn an oath just like I have, and he's under the same penalty. I don't think it will be hard for men as old as we are to keep the peace.

**PARIS**

You both have honorable reputations, and it's too bad you've been enemies for so long. But what do you say to my request?

**CAPULET**

I can only repeat what I've said before. My daughter is still very young. She's not even fourteen years old. Let's wait two more summers before we start thinking she's ready to get married.

**PARIS**

**Original Text**

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

**CAPULET**

And too soon marred are those so early made.  
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she.

- 15 She's the hopeful lady of my earth.  
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart.  
My will to her consent is but a part.  
An she agreed within her scope of choice,  
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
- 20 This night I hold an old accustomed feast,  
Whereto I have invited many a guest  
Such as I love. And you among the store,  
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.  
At my poor house look to behold this night
- 25 Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.

**Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2**

Such comfort as do lusty young men feel  
When well-appareled April on the heel  
Of limping winter treads. Even such delight  
Among fresh fennel buds shall you this night

- 30 Inherit at my house. Hear all, all see,  
And like her most whose merit most shall be—  
Which on more view of many, mine, being one,  
May stand in number, though in reckoning none,  
Come, go with me.

- 35 *(to PETER, giving him a paper)*

Go, sirrah, trudge about

Through fair Verona. 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**

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

*Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO*

**BENVOLIO**

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

**Modern Text**

Girls younger than she often marry and become happy mothers.

**CAPULET**

Girls who marry so young grow up too soon. But go ahead and charm her, gentle Paris; make her love you. My permission is only part of her decision. If she agrees to marry you, my blessing and fair words will confirm her choice. Tonight I'm having a feast that we've celebrated for many years. I've invited many of my closest friends, and I'd like to welcome you and add you to the guest list. At my humble house tonight, you can expect to see dazzling stars that walk on the ground and light the sky from below.

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

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

*CAPULET and PARIS exit.*

**PETER**

Find the people whose names are on this list? It is written that shoemakers and tailors should play with each others' tools, that fisherman should play with paints, and painters should play with with fishing nets. But I've been sent to find the people whose names are written on this list, and I can't read! I'll never find them on my own. I've got to find somebody who knows how to read to help me. But here come some people, right in the nick of time.

*BENVOLIO and ROMEO enter*

**BENVOLIO**

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

## Original Text

## Modern Text

your old lovesickness will be cured.

## Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3

**ROMEO**

Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

**BENVOLIO**

For what, I pray thee?

**ROMEO**

For your broken shin.

**BENVOLIO**

Why Romeo, art thou mad?

**ROMEO**

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

**PETER**

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

**ROMEO**

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

**PETER**

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

**ROMEO**

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

**PETER**

Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

**ROMEO**

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

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

**ROMEO**

The [plantain](#) leaf is excellent for that.

**BENVOLIO**

For what, Romeo?

**ROMEO**

For when you cut your shin.

**BENVOLIO**

What? Romeo, are you crazy?

**ROMEO**

I'm not crazy, but I'm tied up tighter than a mental  
patient in a straitjacket. I'm locked up in a prison  
and deprived of food. I'm whipped and tortured—  
*(to PETER)* Good evening, good fellow.

**PETER**

May God give you a good evening. Excuse me,  
sir, do you know how to read?

**ROMEO**

I can read my own fortune in my misery.

**PETER**

Perhaps you've learned from life and not from  
books. But please tell me, can you read anything  
you see?

**ROMEO**

Yes, if I know the language and the letters.

**PETER**

I see. Well, that's an [honest answer](#). Have a nice  
day.

**ROMEO**

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

“Signor Martino and his wife and daughters,  
Count Anselme and his beautiful sisters,  
Vitruvio's widow,  
Signor Placentio and his lovely nieces,  
Mercutio and his brother Valentine,  
My uncle Capulet and his wife and daughters,  
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia,

## Act 1, Scene 2, Page 4

Seigneur Valentio and his cousin Tybalt;  
Lucio and the lively Helena.”  
A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

**PETER**

75 Up.

**ROMEO**

Whither? To supper?

**PETER**

Signor Valentio and his cousin Tybalt,  
Lucio and the lively Helena.”  
That's a nice group of people. Where are they  
supposed to come?

**PETER**

Up.

**ROMEO**

Where? To supper?

**PETER**

## Original Text

To our house.

**ROMEO**

Whose house?

**PETER**

My master's.

**ROMEO**

80 Indeed, I should have asked thee that before.

**PETER**

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

*Exit PETER*

**BENVOLIO**

At this same ancient feast of Capulet's

85 Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so loves

With all the admired beauties of Verona.

Go thither, and with unattainted eye

Compare her face with some that I shall show,

And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

**ROMEO**

90 When the devout religion of mine eye

Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires,

And these, who, often drowned, could never die,

Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!

One fairer than my love? The all-seeing sun

95 Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

## Modern Text

To our house.

**ROMEO**

Whose house?

**PETER**

My master's house.

**ROMEO**

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

**PETER**

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

*PETER exits.*

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

If my eyes ever lie to me like that, let my tears turn into flames and burn them for being such obvious liars! A woman more beautiful than the one I love? The sun itself has never seen anyone as beautiful since the world began.

## Act 1, Scene 2, Page 5

**BENVOLIO**

Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,

Herself poised with herself in either eye.

But in that crystal scales let there be weighed

Your lady's love against some other maid

100 That I will show you shining at the feast,

And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

**ROMEO**

I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,

But to rejoice in splendor of mine own.

*Exeunt*

**BENVOLIO**

Come on, you first decided she was beautiful when no one else was around. There was no one to compare her to except herself. But let your eyes compare her to another beautiful woman who I'll show you at this feast, and you won't think she's the best anymore.

**ROMEO**

I'll go with you. Not because I think you'll show me anything better, but so I can see the woman I love.

*They exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 3

*Enter LADY CAPULET and NURSE*

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**NURSE**

*LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.*

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**NURSE**

## Original Text

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

*Enter JULIET*

**JULIET**

5 How now, who calls?

**NURSE**

Your mother.

**JULIET**

Madam, I am here. What is your will?

**LADY CAPULET**

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

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

**NURSE**

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

**LADY CAPULET**

She's not fourteen.

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

A fortnight and odd days.

## Modern Text

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

*JULIET enters.*

**JULIET**

What is it? Who's calling me?

**NURSE**

Your mother.

**JULIET**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**NURSE**

Yes, I know her age down to the hour.

**LADY CAPULET**

She's not even fourteen.

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

Two weeks and a few odd days.

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2

**NURSE**

Even or odd, of all days in the year,  
Come Lammastide at night shall she be fourteen.

20 Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—  
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God.  
She was too good for me. But, as I said,  
On Lammastide at night shall she be fourteen.  
That shall she. Marry, I remember it well.

25 'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years,  
And she was weaned—I never shall forget it—  
Of all the days of the year, upon that day.  
For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,  
Sitting in the sun under the dovehouse wall.

30 My lord and you were then at Mantua.—  
Nay, I do bear a brain.—But, as I said,  
When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple  
Of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,  
To see it tetchy and fall out with the dug!

35 "Shake!" quoth the dovehouse. 'Twas no need, I trow,  
To bid me trudge.  
And since that time it is eleven years,  
For then she could stand alone. Nay, by the rood,  
She could have run and waddled all about,  
40 For even the day before, she broke her brow.

**NURSE**

Whether it's even or odd, of all the days in the  
year, on the night of Lammastide, she'll be  
fourteen. She and Susan—God rest her and all  
Christian souls—were born on the same day.  
Well, Susan died and is with God. She was too  
good for me. But like I said, on the night of  
Lammastide, she will be fourteen. Yes, she will.  
Indeed, I remember it well. It's been eleven years  
since the earthquake. She stopped nursing from  
my breast on that very day. I'll never forget it. I  
had put bitter wormwood on my breast as I was  
sitting in the sun, under the wall of the  
dovehouse. You and your husband were in  
Mantua. Boy, do I have some memory! But like I  
said, when she tasted the bitter wormwood on my  
nipple, the pretty little babe got irritated and  
started to quarrel with my breast. Then the  
dovehouse shook with the earthquake. There was  
no need to tell me to get out of there. That was  
eleven years ago. By then she could stand up all  
by herself. No, I swear, by that time she could run  
and waddle all around. I remember because she  
had cut her forehead just the day before. My

**Original Text**

And then my husband—God be with his soul!  
 He was a merry man—took up the child.  
 “Yea,” quoth he, “Dost thou fall upon thy face?  
 Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,  
 45 Wilt thou not, Jule?” and, by my holy dame,  
 The pretty wretch left crying and said “ay.”  
 To see now, how a jest shall come about!  
 I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,  
 I never should forget it. “Wilt thou not, Jule?” quoth  
 50 he.  
 And, pretty fool, it stinted and said “ay.”

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**Modern Text**

husband—God rest his soul, he was a happy  
 man—picked up the child. “Oh,” he said, “Did you  
 fall on your face? You’ll **fall backward** when you  
 grow smarter. Won’t you, Jule.” And I swear, the  
 poor pretty thing stopped crying and said, “Yes.”  
 Oh, to watch a joke come true! I bet if I live a  
 thousand years, I’ll never forget it. “Won’t you,  
 Jule,” he said. And the pretty fool stopped crying  
 and said, “Yes.”

**LADY CAPULET**

Enough of this. Please be quiet.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3****NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**JULIET**

It is an honor that I dream not of.

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**NURSE**

A man, young lady! Lady, such a man  
 As all the world. Why, he’s a man of wax.

**NURSE**

Yes, madam. But I can’t help laughing to think  
 that the baby stopped crying and said, “Yes.” I  
 swear, she had a bump on her forehead as big as  
 a rooster’s testicle. It was a painful bruise, and  
 she was crying bitterly. “Yes,” said my husband,  
 “Did you fall on your face? You’ll fall backward  
 when you grow up, won’t you, Jule?” And she  
 stopped crying and said, “Yes.”

**JULIET**

Now you stop too, Nurse, please.

**NURSE**

Peace. I’m done talking. May God choose you to  
 receive his grace. You were the prettiest baby I  
 ever nursed. If I live to see you get married  
 someday, all my wishes will come true.

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, marriage is exactly what we have to  
 discuss. Tell me, my daughter Juliet, what is your  
 attitude about getting married?

**JULIET**

It is an honor that I do not dream of.

**NURSE**

“An honor?” If I weren’t your only nurse, I’d say  
 you had sucked wisdom from the breast that fed  
 you.

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, start thinking about marriage now. Here in  
 Verona there are girls younger than you—girls  
 from noble families—who have already become  
 mothers. By my count, I was already your mother  
 at just about your age, while you remain a virgin.  
 Well then, I’ll say this quickly: the valiant Paris  
 wants you as his bride.

**NURSE**

What a man, young lady. He’s as great a man as  
 any in the whole world. He’s as perfect as if he

## Original Text

## Modern Text

were sculpted from wax.

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4

**LADY CAPULET**

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

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

85 Examine every married lineament

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

This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
90 To beautify him only lacks a cover.

The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride  
For fair without the fair within to hide.

That book in many's eyes doth share the glory  
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.

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

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris, love?

**JULIET**

I'll look to like if looking liking move.

100 But no more deep will I endart mine eye  
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

*Enter PETER*

**LADY CAPULET**

Summertime in Verona has no flower as fine as him.

**NURSE**

No, he's a fine flower, truly, a flower.

**LADY CAPULET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

(to JULIET) Give us a quick answer. Can you accept Paris's love?

**JULIET**

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

*PETER enters.*

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 5

**PETER**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

We follow thee.—Juliet, the county stays.

**NURSE**

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

*Exeunt*

**PETER**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

We'll follow you.

Juliet, the count is waiting for you.

**NURSE**

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

*They all exit.*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 4

Enter **ROMEO, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO**, with five or six other **MASKERS** and **TORCHBEARERS**

**ROMEO, MERCUTIO**, and **BENVOLIO** enter dressed as maskers, along with five or six other **MASKERS**, carrying a drum and torches.

**ROMEO**

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

**ROMEO**

What will we say is our excuse for being here? Or should we enter without apologizing?

**BENVOLIO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

It's out of fashion to give lengthy explanations like that. We're not going to introduce our dance by having someone dress up as Cupid, blindfolded and carrying a toy bow to frighten the ladies like a scarecrow. Nor are we going to recite a memorized speech to introduce ourselves. Let them judge us however they please. We'll give them a dance and then hit the road.

**ROMEO**

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

**ROMEO**

Give me a torch. I don't want to dance. I feel sad, so let me be the one who carries the light.

**MERCUTIO**

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

**MERCUTIO**

No, noble Romeo, you've got to 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.

**ROMEO**

Not me, believe me. You're wearing dancing shoes with nimble soles. My soul is made out of lead, and it's so heavy it keeps me stuck on the ground so I can't move.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

You're a lover. Take Cupid's wings and fly higher than the average man.

**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 burden do I sink.

**ROMEO**

His arrow has pierced me too deeply, so I can't fly high with his cheerful feathers. Because this wound keeps me down, I can't leap any higher than my dull sadness. I sink under the heavy weight of love.

## Act 1, Scene 4, Page 2

**MERCUTIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

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



## Original Text

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

Nay, that's not so.

**MERCUTIO**

- 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 fine wits.

## Modern Text

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

No we're not—it's night.

**MERCUTIO**

I mean, we're wasting the light of our torches by  
delaying, which is like wasting the sunshine  
during the day. Use your common sense to figure  
out what I mean, instead of trying to be clever or  
trusting your five senses.

## Act 1, Scene 4, Page 3

**ROMEO**

And we mean well in going to this mask,  
But 'tis no wit to go.

**MERCUTIO**

Why, may one ask?

**ROMEO**

- 50 I dreamt a dream tonight.

**MERCUTIO**

And so did I.

**ROMEO**

Well, what was yours?

**MERCUTIO**

That dreamers often lie.

**ROMEO**

In bed asleep while they do dream things true.

**MERCUTIO**

Oh, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

**BENVOLIO**

Queen Mab, what's she

**MERCUTIO**

- 55 She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes  
In shape no bigger than an agate stone  
On the forefinger of an alderman,  
Drawn with a team of little atoms  
Over men's noses as they lie asleep.

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Why, may I ask?

**ROMEO**

I had a dream last night.

**MERCUTIO**

So did I.

**ROMEO**

Well, what was your dream?

**MERCUTIO**

My dream told me that dreamers often lie.

**ROMEO**

They lie in bed while they dream about the truth.

**MERCUTIO**

Oh, then I see you've been with [Queen Mab](#).

**BENVOLIO**

Who's Queen Mab?

**MERCUTIO**

She's the fairies' midwife. She's no bigger than  
the stone on a city councilman's ring. She rides  
around in a wagon drawn by tiny little atoms, and  
she rides over men's noses as they lie sleeping.  
The spokes of her wagon are made of spiders'

## Original Text

- 60 Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs,  
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,  
Her traces of the smallest spider's web,  
Her collars of the moonshine's watery beams,  
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,  
65 Her wagoner a small gray-coated gnat,  
Not half so big as a round little worm  
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.

## Modern Text

legs. The cover of her wagon is made of grasshoppers' wings. The harnesses are made of the smallest spiderwebs. The collars are made out of moonbeams. Her whip is a thread attached to a cricket's bone. Her wagon driver is a tiny bug in a gray coat; he's not half the size of a little round worm that comes from the finger of a lazy young girl.

## Act 1, Scene 4, Page 4

- Her chariot is an empty hazelnut  
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,  
70 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;  
On courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies straight;  
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;  
75 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,  
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.  
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit.  
80 And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail  
Tickling a parson's nose as he lies asleep,  
Then he dreams of another benefice.  
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
85 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five fathom deep, and then anon  
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,  
And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two  
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab  
90 That plaits the manes of horses in the night  
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,  
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes.  
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,  
That presses them and learns them first to bear,  
95 Making them women of good carriage.  
This is she—

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

Her chariot is a hazelnut shell. It was made by a carpenter squirrel or an old grubworm; they've made wagons for the fairies as long as anyone can remember. In this royal wagon, she rides every night through the brains of lovers and makes them dream about love. She rides over courtiers' knees, and they dream about curtsying. She rides over lawyers' fingers, and right away, they dream about their fees. She rides over ladies' lips, and they immediately dream of kisses. Queen Mab often puts blisters on their lips because their breath smells like candy, which makes her mad. Sometimes she rides over a courtier's lips, and he dreams of making money off of someone. Sometimes she tickles a priest's nose with a tithe-pigs tail, and he dreams of a large donation. Sometimes she rides over a soldier's neck, and he dreams of cutting the throats of foreign enemies, of breaking down walls, of ambushes, of Spanish swords, and of enormous cups of liquor. And then, drums beat in his ear and he wakes up. He's frightened, so he says a couple of prayers and goes back to sleep. She is the same Mab who tangles the hair in horses' manes at night and makes the tangles hard in the dirty hairs, which bring bad luck if they're untangled. Mab is the old hag who gives false sex dreams to virgins and teaches them how to hold a lover and bear a child. She's the one—

**ROMEO**

Enough, enough! Mercutio, be quiet. You're talking nonsense.

**MERCUTIO**

True. I'm talking about dreams, which are the products of a brain that's doing nothing. Dreams are nothing but silly imagination, as thin as air, and less predictable than the wind, which sometimes blows on the frozen north and then gets angry and blows south.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 4, Page 5

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

115 Strike, drum.

*March about the stage and exeunt*

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Beat the drum.

*They march about the stage and exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 5

*PETER and other SERVINGMEN come forth with napkins*

**PETER**

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

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

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

**PETER**

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

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

Ay, boy, ready.

**PETER**

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

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

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

*Exeunt PETER and SERVINGMEN*

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

*PETER and other SERVINGMEN come  
forward with napkins.*

**PETER**

Where's Potpan? Why isn't he helping us  
clear the table? He should be moving and  
scraping plates!

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

When only one or two men have all the  
good manners, and even they are dirty,  
things are bad.

**PETER**

Take away the stools, the sideboards, and  
the plates. You, good friend, save me a  
piece of marzipan, and if you love me,  
have the porter let in Susan Grindstone  
and Nell. Antony and Potpan!

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

Yes, boy, I'm ready.

**PETER**

They're looking for you in the great  
chamber.

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

We can't be in two places at once, both  
here and there! Cheers, boys. Be quick for  
a while and let the one who lives the  
longest take everything.

*PETER and the SERVINGMEN exit.*

*CAPULET enters with  
his COUSIN, TYBALT, LADY  
CAPULET, JULIET, and other members  
of the house. They  
meet ROMEO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO,*

## Original Text

**CAPULET**

Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes

- 15 Ah, my mistresses! Which of you all  
Unplagued with corns will walk a bout with you.—  
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,  
She, I'll swear, hath corns. Am I come near ye now?—  
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day  
20 That I have worn a visor and could tell  
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear  
Such as would please. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone.—  
You are welcome, gentlemen.—Come, musicians, play.  
*(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 unlooked-for sport comes well.—  
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good cousin Capulet,  
30 For you and I are past our dancing days.  
How long is 't now since last yourself and I  
Were in a mask?

## Modern Text

*and other guests and MASKERS*

**CAPULET**

Welcome, gentlemen. The ladies who don't have corns on their toes will dance with you. Ha, my ladies, which of you will refuse to dance now? Whichever of you acts shy, I'll swear she has corns. Does that hit close to home? Welcome, gentlemen. There was a time when I could wear a mask over my eyes and charm a lady by whispering a story in her ear. That time is gone, gone, gone. You are welcome gentlemen. Come on, musicians, play music. *(music plays and they dance, ROMEO stands apart)* Make room in the hall. Make room in the hall. Shake a leg, girls. *(to SERVINGMEN)* More light, you rascals. Flip over the tables and get them out of the way. And put the fire out—it's getting too hot in here. *(to his COUSIN)* Ah, my man, this unexpected fun feels good. No, sit down, sit down, my good Capulet cousin. You and I are too old to dance. *(CAPULET and his COUSIN sit down)* How long is it now since you and I last wore masks at a party like this?

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 2

**CAPULETS' COUSIN**

By'r Lady, thirty years.

**CAPULET**

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

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

**CAPULET'S COUSIN**

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

**CAPULET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**SERVINGMAN**

I know not, sir.

**ROMEO**

- Oh, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear,  
45 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.

**CAPULET'S COUSIN**

I swear, it must be thirty years.

**CAPULET**

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

**CAPULET'S COUSIN**

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

**CAPULET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**SERVINGMAN**

I don't know, sir.

**ROMEO**

Oh, she shows the torches how to burn bright!  
She stands out against the darkness like a  
jeweled earring hanging against the cheek of an  
African. Her beauty is too good for this world;

## Original Text

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.

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 3

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

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

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

Young Romeo is it?

**TYBALT**

'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

**CAPULET**

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

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 4

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

He shall be endured.  
 What, Goodman boy! I say, he shall. Go to.  
 Am I the master here, or you? Go to.  
 You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul,  
 You'll make a mutiny among my guests.  
 80 You will set cock-a-hoop. You'll be the man!

## Modern Text

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

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

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

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

Is it young Romeo?

**TYBALT**

That's him, that villain Romeo.

**CAPULET**

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

**TYBALT**

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

**CAPULET**

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

## Original Text

**TYBALT**

Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

**CAPULET**

Go to, go to.

You are a saucy boy. Is 't so, indeed?

This trick may chance to scathe you, I know what.

You must contrary me. Marry, 'tis time.—

85 Well said, my hearts!—You are a princox, go.

Be quiet, or—More light, more light!—For shame!

I'll make you quiet.—What, cheerly, my hearts!

*Music plays again, and the guests dance*

**TYBALT**

Patience perforce with willful choler meeting

Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

90 I will withdraw, but this intrusion shall

Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall.

*Exit TYBALT*

## Modern Text

**TYBALT**

But, uncle, we're being disrespected.

**CAPULET**

Go on, go on. You're an insolent little boy. Is that how it is, really? This stupidity will come back to bite you. I know what I'll do. You have to contradict me, do you? I'll teach you a lesson. *(to the GUESTS)* Well done, my dear

guests! *(to TYBALT)* You're a punk, get away.

Keep your mouth shut, or else—

*(to SERVINGMEN)* more light, more light!

*(to TYBALT)* You should be ashamed. 'll shut you up. *(to the guests)* Keep having fun, my dear friends!

*The music plays again, and the guests dance*

**TYBALT**

The combination of forced patience and pure

rage is making my body tremble. I'll leave here

now, but Romeo's prank, which seems so sweet to him now, will turn bitter to him later.

*TYBALT exits.*

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 5

**ROMEO**

*(taking JULIET's hand)* If I profane with my unwortheiest hand

This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this:

95 My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

**JULIET**

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,

Which mannerly devotion shows in this,

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

**ROMEO**

100 Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do.

They pray; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

105 Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.

*Kisses her*

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

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

Good pilgrim, you don't give your hand enough

credit. By holding my hand you show polite

devotion. After all, pilgrims touch the hands of

statues of saints. Holding one palm against another is like a kiss.

**ROMEO**

Don't saints and pilgrims have lips too?

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

Well then, saint, let lips do what hands do. I'm

praying for you to kiss me. Please grant my prayer so my faith doesn't turn to despair.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

Then don't move while I act out my prayer.

*He kisses her.*

Now my sin has been taken from my lips by

## Original Text

**JULIET**

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

**ROMEO**

Sin from thy lips? O trespass sweetly urged!

110 Give me my sin again.

*They kiss again*

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 6

**JULIET**

You kiss by th' book.

**NURSE**

Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

*JULIET moves away***ROMEO**

What is her mother?

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO***(aside)* Is she a Capulet?

O dear account! My life is my foe's debt.

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

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

**CAPULET**

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

*All but JULIET and NURSE move to exit*

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 7

**JULIET**

Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

**NURSE**

The son and heir of old Tiberio.

**JULIET**

## Modern Text

yours.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

*They kiss again***JULIET**

You kiss like you've studied how.

**NURSE**

Madam, your mother wants to talk to you.

*JULIET moves away***ROMEO**

Who is her mother?

**NURSE**

Indeed, young man, her mother is the lady of the house. She is a good, wise, and virtuous lady. I nursed her daughter, whom you were just talking to. Let me tell you, the man who marries her will become very wealthy.

**ROMEO***(to himself)* Is she a Capulet? Oh, this is a heavy price to pay! My life is in the hands of my enemy.**BENVOLIO***(to ROMEO)* Come on, let's go. Right when things are the most fun is the best time to leave.**ROMEO**

Yes, but I'm afraid I'm in more trouble than ever.

**CAPULET**

No gentlemen, don't get ready to go now. We have a little dessert coming up. *(they whisper in his ear)* Is that really true? Well, then, I thank you both. I thank you, honest gentlemen. Good night. Bring more torches over here! Come on, let's all get to bed. *(to his COUSIN)* Ah, my man, I swear, it's getting late. I'm going to get some rest.

*Everyone except JULIET and NURSE begins to exit.***JULIET**

Come over here, nurse. Who is that gentleman?

**NURSE**

He is the son and heir of old Tiberio.

**JULIET****JULIET**

Come over here, nurse. Who is that gentleman?

**NURSE**

He is the son and heir of old Tiberio.

**JULIET**

## Original Text

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

**NURSE**

Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

I know not.

**JULIET**

Go ask his name.—If he be married.

135 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**

*(aside)* My only love sprung from my only hate!  
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

140 Prodigious birth of love it is to me,  
That I must love a loathèd enemy.

**NURSE**

What's this? What's this?

**JULIET**

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

*One calls within "Juliet!"*

**NURSE**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

I don't know his name.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

What's this? What's this?

**JULIET**

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

*Somebody calls, "Juliet!" from offstage.*

**NURSE**

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

*They exit.*

## Act 2, Prologue

*Enter CHORUS*

**CHORUS**

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,  
And young affection gapes to be his heir.  
That fair for which love groaned for and would die  
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.

5 Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,  
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks,  
But to his foe supposed he must complain,  
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.  
Being held a foe, he may not have access

10 To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear.  
And she as much in love, her means much less  
To meet her new beloved anywhere.  
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,  
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.

*The CHORUS enters.*

**CHORUS**

Now Romeo's old feelings of desire are dying, and a new desire is eager to take their place. Romeo groaned for the beautiful Rosaline and said he would die for her, but compared with tender Juliet, Rosaline doesn't seem beautiful now. Now someone loves Romeo, and he's in love again—both of them falling for each others' good looks. But he has to make his speeches of love to a woman who's supposed to be his enemy. And she's been hooked by someone she should fear. Because he's an enemy, Romeo has no chance to see Juliet and say the things a lover normally says. And Juliet's just as much in love as he, but she has even less opportunity to meet her lover. But love gives them power, and time



## Original Text

## Modern Text

gives them the chance to meet, sweetening the extreme danger with intense pleasure.

*Exit*

*The CHORUS exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 1

*Enter ROMEO alone*

*ROMEO enters alone.*

**ROMEO**

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

*Moves away Enter BENVOLIO with MERCUTIO*

**ROMEO**

Can I go away while my heart stays here? I have to go back to where my heart is.

*ROMEO moves away. BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.*

**BENVOLIO**

Romeo, my cousin Romeo! Romeo!

**MERCUTIO**

He is wise,  
And, on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.

**BENVOLIO**

- 5 He ran this way and leapt this orchard wall.  
Call, good Mercutio.

**MERCUTIO**

- Nay, I'll conjure too!  
Romeo! Humours, madman, passion, lover!  
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh!  
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied.  
10 Cry but "Ay me!" Pronounce but "love" and "dove."  
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,  
One nickname for her purblind son and heir,  
Young Abraham Cupid, he that shot so true  
When King Cophetua loved the beggar maid.—  
15 He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not.  
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.—  
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,  
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,  
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,  
20 And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,  
That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

**BENVOLIO**

*(calling)* Romeo, my cousin, Romeo, Romeo!

**MERCUTIO**

He's a smart boy. I bet he slipped away and went home to bed.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

I'll conjure him as if I were summoning a spirit. Romeo! Madman! Passion! Lover! Show yourself in the form of a sigh. Speak one rhyme, and I'll be satisfied. Just cry out, "Ah me!" Just say "love" and "dove." Say just one lovely word to my good friend Venus. Just say the nickname of her blind son Cupid, the one who shot arrows so well in the old story.—Romeo doesn't hear me. He doesn't stir. He doesn't move. The silly ape is dead, but I must make him appear.—I summon you by Rosaline's bright eyes, by her high forehead and her red lips, by her fine feet, by her straight legs, by her trembling thighs, and by the regions right next to her thighs. In the name of all of these things, I command you to appear before us in your true form.

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 2

**BENVOLIO**

An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

**MERCUTIO**

- This cannot anger him. 'Twould anger him  
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle  
25 Of some strange nature, letting it there stand  
Till she had laid it and conjured it down.  
That were some spite. My invocation  
Is fair and honest. In his mistress' name  
I conjure only but to raise up him.

**BENVOLIO**

- 30 Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,  
To be consorted with the humorous night.

**BENVOLIO**

If he hears you, you'll make him angry.

**MERCUTIO**

What I'm saying can't anger him. He would be angry if I summoned a strange spirit for her to have sex with—that's what would make him angry. The things I'm saying are fair and honest. All I'm doing is saying the name of the woman he loves to lure him out of the darkness.

**BENVOLIO**

Come on. He's hidden behind these trees to keep the night company. His love is blind, so it belongs

## Original Text

Blind is his love and best befits the dark.

**MERCUTIO**

If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.

Now will he sit under a medlar tree

- 35 And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit  
As maids call medlars when they laugh alone.—  
O Romeo, that she were! Oh, that she were  
An open arse, and thou a poperin pear.  
Romeo, good night. I'll to my truckle bed.  
40 This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep.—  
Come, shall we go?

**BENVOLIO**

Go, then, for 'tis in vain

To seek him here that means not to be found.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

in the dark.

**MERCUTIO**

If love is blind, it can't hit the target. Now he'll sit under a **medlar** tree and wish his mistress were one of those fruits that look like female genitalia. Oh Romeo, I wish she *were* an open-arse, and you a Popperin pear to "pop her in." Good night, Romeo. I'll go to my little trundle bed. This open field is too cold a place for me to sleep. (*to*BENVOLIO) Come on, should we go?

**BENVOLIO**

Let's go. There's no point in looking for him if he doesn't want to be found.

*BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 2

*ROMEO returns*

**ROMEO**

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

*JULIET appears in a window above*

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

- 5 Who is already sick and pale with grief,  
That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she.  
Be not her maid since she is envious.  
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,  
And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off!  
10 It is my lady. Oh, it is my love.  
Oh, that she knew she were!  
She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?  
Her eye discourses. I will answer it.—  
I am too bold. 'Tis not to me she speaks.  
15 Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?  
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars  
20 As daylight doth a lamp. Her eye in heaven  
Would through the airy region stream so bright  
That birds would sing and think it were not night.  
See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.  
Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand  
25 That I might touch that cheek!

**JULIET**

Ay me!

*ROMEO returns.*

**ROMEO**

It's easy for someone to joke about scars if they've never been cut.

*JULIET enters on the balcony.*

But wait, what's that light in the window over there? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun. Rise up, beautiful sun, and kill the **jealous moon**. The moon is already sick and pale with grief because you, Juliet, her maid, are more beautiful than she. Don't be her maid, because she is jealous. Virginity makes her look sick and green. Only fools hold on to their virginity. Let it go. Oh, there's my lady! Oh, it is my love. Oh, I wish she knew how much I love her. She's talking, but she's not saying anything. So what? Her eyes are saying something. I will answer them. I am too bold. She's not talking to me. Two of the brightest stars in the whole sky had to go away on business, and they're asking her eyes to twinkle in their places until they return. What if her eyes were in the sky and the stars were in her head?— The brightness of her cheeks would outshine the stars the way the sun outshines a lamp. If her eyes were in the night sky, they would shine so brightly through space that birds would start singing, thinking her light was the light of day. Look how she leans her hand on her cheek. Oh, I wish I was the glove on that hand so that I could touch that cheek.

**JULIET**

Oh, my!

## Original Text

**ROMEO**

*(aside)* She speaks.

O, speak again, bright angel! For thou art  
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,  
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven  
Unto the white, upturnèd, wondering eyes  
30 Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him  
When he bestrides the lazy-puffing clouds  
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

*(aside)* Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

**JULIET**

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
40 What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other word would smell as sweet.  
45 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name, which is no part of thee  
Take all myself.

**ROMEO**

I take thee at thy word.  
50 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized.  
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

**JULIET**

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

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 3

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.

## Modern Text

**ROMEO**

*(to himself)* She speaks. Oh, speak again, bright angel. You are as glorious as an angel tonight. You shine above me, like a winged messenger from heaven who makes mortal men fall on their backs to look up at the sky, watching the angel walking on the clouds and sailing on the air.

**JULIET**

*(not knowing ROMEO hears her)* Oh, Romeo, Romeo, why do you have to be Romeo? Forget about your father and change your name. Or else, if you won't change your name, just swear you love me and I'll stop being a Capulet.

**ROMEO**

*(to himself)* Should I listen for more, or should I speak now?

**JULIET**

*(still not knowing ROMEO hears her)* It's only your name that's my enemy. You'd still be yourself even if you stopped being a Montague. What's a Montague anyway? It isn't a hand, a foot, an arm, a face, or any other part of a man. Oh, be some other name! What does a name mean? The thing we call a rose would smell just as sweet if we called it by any other name. Romeo would be just as perfect even if he wasn't called Romeo. Romeo, lose your name. Trade in your name—which really has nothing to do with you—and take all of me in exchange.

**ROMEO**

*(to JULIET)* I trust your words. Just call me your love, and I will take a new name. From now on I will never be Romeo again.

**JULIET**

Who are you? Why do you hide in the darkness and listen to my private thoughts?

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

I am neither of those things if you dislike them.

**Original Text****JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls,  
 For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
 And what love can do, that dares love attempt.  
 Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

**JULIET**

70 If they do see thee they will murder thee.

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

**ROMEO**

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

**Act 2, Scene 2, Page 4****JULIET**

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

**ROMEO**

80 By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.  
 He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.  
 I am no pilot. Yet, wert thou as far  
 As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,  
 I would adventure for such merchandise.

**JULIET**

85 Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
 Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
 For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.  
 Fain would I dwell on form. Fain, fain deny  
 What I have spoke. But farewell compliment!  
 90 Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "ay,"  
 And I will take thy word. Yet if thou swear'st  
 Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,  
 They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
 If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.  
 95 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
 I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,  
 So thou wilt woo. But else, not for the world.  
 In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,  
 And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light.  
 100 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

**Modern Text****JULIET**

Tell me, how did you get in here? And why did  
 you come? The orchard walls are high, and it's  
 hard to climb over them. If any of my relatives find  
 you here they'll kill you because of who you are.

**ROMEO**

I flew over these walls with the light wings of love.  
 Stone walls can't keep love out. Whatever a man  
 in love can possibly do, his love will make him try  
 to do it. Therefore your relatives are no obstacle.

**JULIET**

If they see you, they'll murder you.

**ROMEO**

Alas, one angry look from you would be worse  
 than twenty of your relatives with swords. Just  
 look at me kindly, and I'm invincible against their  
 hatred.

**JULIET**

I'd give anything to keep them from seeing you  
 here.

**ROMEO**

The darkness will hide me from them. And if you  
 don't love me, let them find me here. I'd rather  
 they killed me than have to live without your love.

**JULIET**

Who told you how to get here below my  
 bedroom?

**ROMEO**

Love showed me the way—the same thing that  
 made me look for you in the first place. Love told  
 me what to do, and I let love borrow my eyes. I'm  
 not a sailor, but if you were across the farthest  
 sea, I would risk everything to gain you.

**JULIET**

You can't see my face because it's dark out.  
 Otherwise, you'd see me blushing about the  
 things you've heard me say tonight. I would be  
 happy to keep up good manners and deny the  
 things I said. But forget about good manners. Do  
 you love me? I know you'll say "yes," and I'll  
 believe you. But if you swear you love me, you  
 might turn out to be lying. They say *Jove* laughs  
 when lovers lie to each other. Oh Romeo, if you  
 really love me, say it truly. Or if you think it's too  
 easy and quick to win my heart, I'll frown and  
 play hard-to-get, as long as that will make you try  
 to win me, but otherwise I wouldn't act that way  
 for anything. In truth, handsome Montague, I like  
 you too much, so you may think my behavior is  
 loose. But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove myself

**Original Text**

Than those that have more coying to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware,  
My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,  
105 And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

**ROMEO**

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

**Act 2, Scene 2, Page 5****JULIET**

O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,  
110 That monthly changes in her circle 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,  
115 And I'll believe thee.

**ROMEO**

If my heart's dear love—

**JULIET**

Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contract tonight.  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
120 Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night.  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast.

**ROMEO**

125 O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

**JULIET**

What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

**ROMEO**

Th' exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO****Modern Text**

more faithful than girls who act coy and play  
hard-to-get. I should have been more  
standoffish, I confess, but you overheard me  
talking about the love in my heart when I didn't  
know you were there. So excuse me, and do not  
assume that because you made me love you so  
easily my love isn't serious.

**ROMEO**

Lady, I swear by the sacred moon above, the  
moon that paints the tops of fruit trees with  
silver—

**JULIET**

Don't swear by the moon. The moon is always  
changing. Every month its position in the sky  
shifts. I don't want you to turn out to be that  
inconsistent too.

**ROMEO**

What should I swear by?

**JULIET**

Don't swear at all. But if you have to swear,  
swear by your wonderful self, which is the god I  
worship like an idol, and then I'll believe you.

**ROMEO**

If my heart's dear love—

**JULIET**

Well, don't swear. Although you bring me joy, I  
can't take joy in this exchange of promises  
tonight. It's too crazy. We haven't done enough  
thinking. It's too sudden. It's too much like  
lightning, which flashes and then disappears  
before you can say, "it's lightning." My sweet,  
good night. Our love, which right now is like a  
flower bud in the summer air, may turn out to be  
a beautiful flower by the next time we meet. I  
hope you enjoy the same sweet peace and rest I  
feel in my heart.

**ROMEO**

Oh, are you going to leave me so unsatisfied?

**JULIET**

What satisfaction could you possibly have  
tonight?

**ROMEO**

I would be satisfied if we made each other true  
promises of love.

**JULIET**

I pledged my love to you before you asked me  
to. Yet I wish I could take that promise back, so I  
had it to give again.

**ROMEO**

## Original Text

130 Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 6

**JULIET**

But to be frank, and give it thee again.  
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.  
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep. The more I give to thee,

135 The more I have, for both are infinite.

*NURSE calls from within*

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

*Exit JULIET, above*

**ROMEO**

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

*Enter JULIET, above*

**JULIET**

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.  
If that thy bent of love be honorable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow  
145 By one that I'll procure to come to thee  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite,  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay  
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

**NURSE**

*(from within)* Madam!

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

*(from within)* Madam!

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 7

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

So thrive my soul—

**JULIET**

A thousand times good night!

*Exit JULIET, above*

**ROMEO**

A thousand times the worse to want thy light.

## Modern Text

You would take it back? Why would you do that,  
my love?

**JULIET**

Only to be generous and give it to you once  
more. But I'm wishing for something I already  
have. My generosity to you is as limitless as the  
sea, and my love is as deep. The more love I  
give you, the more I have. Both loves are infinite.

*The NURSE calls from offstage.*

I hear a noise inside. Dear love, goodbye—Just a  
minute, good Nurse. Sweet Montague, be true.  
Stay here for a moment. I'll come back.

*JULIET exits.*

**ROMEO**

Oh, blessed, blessed night! Because it's dark  
out, I'm afraid all this is just a dream, too sweet  
to be real.

*JULIET enters on her balcony.*

**JULIET**

Three words, dear Romeo, and then it's good  
night for real. If your intentions as a lover are  
truly honorable and you want to marry me, send  
me word tomorrow. I'll send a messenger to you,  
and you can pass on a message telling me  
where and when we'll be married. I'll lay all my  
fortunes at your feet and follow you, my lord, all  
over the world.

**NURSE**

*(offstage)* Madam!

**JULIET**

*(to the NURSE)* I'll be right  
there! *(to ROMEO)* But if you don't have  
honorable intentions, I beg you—

**NURSE**

*(offstage)* Madam!

**JULIET**

Alright, I'm coming!—I beg you to stop trying for  
me and leave me to my sadness. Tomorrow I'll  
send the messenger.

**ROMEO**

My soul depends on it—

**JULIET**

A thousand times good night.

*JULIET exits.*

**ROMEO**

Leaving you is a thousand times worse than

## Original Text

Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their  
160 books,  
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

*Moves to exit Reenter JULIET, above*

**JULIET**

Hist! Romeo, hist!—Oh, for a falconer's voice,  
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!  
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,  
165 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,  
With repetition of "My Romeo!"

**ROMEO**

It is my soul that calls upon my name.  
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears!

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 8

**JULIET**

170 Romeo!

**ROMEO**

My nyas?

**JULIET**

What o'clock tomorrow  
Shall I send to thee?

**ROMEO**

By the hour of nine.

**JULIET**

I will not fail. 'Tis twenty year till then.  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

**ROMEO**

Let me stand here till thou remember it.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone.  
180 And yet no further than a wanton's bird,  
That lets it hop a little from his hand  
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,  
And with a silken thread plucks it back again,

## Modern Text

being near you. A lover goes toward his beloved  
as enthusiastically as a schoolboy leaving his  
books, but when he leaves his girlfriend, he feels  
as miserable as the schoolboy on his way to  
school.

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

**JULIET**

Hist, Romeo! Hist! Oh, I wish I could make  
a **falconer's** call, so I could bring my little falcon  
back again. I'm trapped in my family's house, so I  
must be quiet. Otherwise I would rip open the  
cave where **Echo** sleeps. I would make her  
repeat his name until her voice grew more  
hoarse than mine by repeating, "My Romeo!"

**ROMEO**

My soul is calling out my name. The sound of  
lovers calling each others names through the  
night is silver-sweet. It's the sweetest sound a  
lover ever hears.

**JULIET**

Romeo!

**ROMEO**

My baby hawk?

**JULIET**

What time tomorrow should I send a messenger  
to you?

**ROMEO**

By nine o'clock.

**JULIET**

I won't fail. From now until then seems like  
twenty years. I have forgotten why I called you  
back.

**ROMEO**

Let me stand here until you remember your  
reason.

**JULIET**

I'll forget it, and you'll have to stand there  
forever. I'll only remember how much I love your  
company.

**ROMEO**

I'll keep standing here, even if you keep  
forgetting. I'll forget that I have any home  
besides this spot right here.

**JULIET**

It's almost morning. I want to make you go, but  
I'd only let you go as far as a spoiled child lets  
his pet bird go. He lets the bird hop a little from  
his hand and then yanks him back by a string.

## Original Text

So loving-jealous of his liberty.

**ROMEO**

185 I would I were thy bird.

**JULIET**

Sweet, so would I.

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow

That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

*Exit JULIET, above*

## Modern Text

**ROMEO**

I wish I was your bird.

**JULIET**

My sweet, so do I. But I would kill you by petting you too much. Good night, good night. Parting is such sweet sorrow that I'll say good night until tonight becomes tomorrow.

*JULIET exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 9

**ROMEO**

Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast.

190 Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest.

Hence will I to my ghostly friar's close cell,

His help to crave and my dear hap to tell.

*Exit*

**ROMEO**

I hope you sleep peacefully. I wish I were Sleep and Peace, so I could spend the night with you.

Now I'll go see my priest, to ask for his help and tell him about my good luck.

*He exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 3

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE, with a basket*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,  
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,  
And fleckled darkness like a drunkard reels  
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.

5 Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,  
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,  
I must upfill this osier cage of ours  
With baleful weeds and precious-juicèd flowers.  
The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb.

10 What is her burying, grave that is her womb.  
And from her womb children of divers kind  
We sucking on her natural bosom find,  
Many for many virtues excellent,  
None but for some and yet all different.

15 Oh, mickle is the powerful grace that lies  
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities.  
For naught so vile that on the earth doth live  
But to the earth some special good doth give.  
Nor aught so good but, strained from that fair use

20 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.  
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,  
And vice sometime by action dignified.

*Enter ROMEO*

Within the infant rind of this small flower  
Poison hath residence and medicine power.

25 For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;  
Being tasted, stays all senses with the heart.  
Two such opposèd kings encamp them still,  
In man as well as herbs—grace and rude will.

*FRIAR LAWRENCE enters by himself, carrying a basket.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

The smiling morning is replacing the frowning night. Darkness is stumbling out of the sun's path like a drunk man. Now, before the sun comes up and burns away the dew, I have to fill this basket of mine with poisonous weeds and medicinal flowers. The Earth is nature's mother and also nature's tomb. Plants are born out of the Earth, and they are buried in the Earth when they die. From the Earth's womb, many different sorts of plants and animals come forth, and the Earth provides her children with many excellent forms of nourishment. Everything nature creates has some special property, and each one is different. Herbs, plants, and stones possess great power. There is nothing on Earth that is so evil that it does not provide the earth with some special quality. And there is nothing that does not turn bad if it's put to the wrong use and abused. Virtue turns to vice if it's misused. Vice sometimes becomes virtue through the right activity.

*ROMEO enters.*

Inside the little rind of this weak flower, there is both poison and powerful medicine. If you smell it, you feel good all over your body. But if you taste it, you die. There are two opposite elements in everything, in men as well as in herbs—good and evil.



## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 2

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

**ROMEO**

Good morrow, Father.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Benedicite.

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?

Young son, it argues a distempered head

So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.

35 Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,

And where care lodges, sleep will never lie.

But where unbruised youth with unstuffed brain

Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.

Therefore thy earliness doth me assure

40 Thou art uproused by some distemperature.

Or if not so, then here I hit it right:

Our Romeo hath not been in bed tonight.

**ROMEO**

That last is true. The sweeter rest was mine.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

**ROMEO**

45 With Rosaline, my ghostly Father? No.

I have forgot that name and that name's woe.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

**ROMEO**

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

I have been feasting with mine enemy,

50 Where on a sudden one hath wounded me,

That's by me wounded. Both our remedies

Within thy help and holy physic lies.

I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,

My intercession likewise steads my foe.

When evil is dominant, death soon kills the body  
like cancer.

**ROMEO**

Good morning, father.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

God bless you. Who greets me so early in the

morning? Young man, something's wrong if

you're getting out of bed this early. Every old man

has worries, and worried men never get any

sleep, but young men shouldn't have a care in the

world. They should get to bed early and get

plenty of sleep. Therefore, the fact that you're

awake this early tells me you've been upset with

some anxiety. If that's not the case, then this

must be the answer: You, Romeo, have not been

to bed tonight.

**ROMEO**

Your last guess is right. I enjoyed a sweeter rest  
than sleep.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

May God forgive you if you've sinned!—Were you  
with Rosaline?

**ROMEO**

With Rosaline, father? No, I have forgotten that

girl and all the sadness she brought me.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That's good, my boy. But where have you been?

**ROMEO**

I'll tell you before you have to ask me again. I

have been feasting with my enemy. Suddenly

someone wounded me with love and was

wounded with love by me. You have the sacred

power to cure both of us. I carry no hatred, holy

man, because my request will benefit my enemy.

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

55 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,

60 And all combined, save what thou must combine

By holy marriage. When and where and how

We met, we wooed and made exchange of vow,

I'll tell thee as we pass, but this I pray:

That thou consent to marry us today.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Speak plainly, make your meaning clear, my son.

A jumbled confession can only receive a jumbled  
absolution.

**ROMEO**

I love rich Capulet's daughter. I love her, and she

loves me. We're bound to each other in every

possible way, except we need you to marry us. I'll

tell you more later about when and where we

met, how we fell in love, and how we exchanged

promises, but now I'm begging you: please, agree

to marry us today.

**Original Text****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

- 65 Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!  
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,  
So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies  
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.  
Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine
- 70 Hath washed thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!  
How much salt water thrown away in waste  
To season love that of it doth not taste!  
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,  
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears.
- 75 Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit  
Of an old tear that is not washed off yet.  
If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,  
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline.  
And art thou changed? Pronounce this sentence
- 80 then:  
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.

**ROMEO**

Thou chid'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

**ROMEO**

And badest me bury love.

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 4****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

**ROMEO**

Oh, let us hence. I stand on sudden haste.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast.

*Exeunt*

**Modern Text****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Holy Saint Francis, this is a drastic change! Have you given up so quickly on Rosaline, whom you loved so much? Then young men love with their eyes, not with their hearts. Jesus and Mary, how many tears did you cry for Rosaline? How many salty tear-drops did you waste salting a love you never tasted? The sun hasn't yet melted away the fog you made with all your sighs. The groans you used to make are still ringing in my old ears. There's still a stain on your cheek from an old tear that hasn't been washed off yet. If you were ever yourself, and this sadness was yours, you and your sadness were all for Rosaline. And now you've changed? Then repeat this after me: you can't expect women to be faithful when men are so unreliable.

**ROMEO**

You scolded me often for loving Rosaline.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

**ROMEO**

And you told me to bury my love.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I didn't tell you to get rid of one love and replace her with another.

**ROMEO**

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

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Oh, she knew very well that you were acting like you were in love without really knowing what love means. But come on, inconsistent young man, come with me. I'll help you with your secret wedding. This marriage may be lucky enough to turn the hatred between your families into pure love.

**ROMEO**

Let's get out of here. I'm in a rush.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Go wisely and slowly. Those who rush stumble and fall.

*They exit.*

**Act 2, Scene 4**

*Enter BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO*

*BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO enter.*

## Original Text

**MERCUTIO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Why, that same pale hard-hearted wench, that  
5 Rosaline,  
Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

**BENVOLIO**

Tybalt, the kinsman to old Capulet,  
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

**MERCUTIO**

A challenge, on my life.

**BENVOLIO**

Romeo will answer it.

**MERCUTIO**

10 Any man that can write may answer a letter.

**BENVOLIO**

Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares,  
being dared.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Why, what is Tybalt?

**MERCUTIO**

More than Prince of Cats. Oh, he's the courageous  
captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-  
song, keeps time, distance, and proportion. He rests  
his minim rests—one, two, and the third in your  
bosom. The very butcher of a silk button, a duelist, a  
duelist, a gentleman of the very first house of the first  
and second cause. Ah, the immortal *passado*,  
the *punto reverso*, the *hai!*

## Modern Text

**MERCUTIO**

Where the devil can Romeo be? Didn't he come  
home last night?

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

That fair-skinned, hard-hearted hussy, Rosaline is  
going to torment him until he goes insane.

**BENVOLIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

I bet it's a challenge.

**BENVOLIO**

Romeo will answer the challenge.

**MERCUTIO**

Any man who knows how to write can answer a  
letter.

**BENVOLIO**

No, Romeo will respond to the letter's writer,  
telling him whether he accepts the challenge.

**MERCUTIO**

Oh, poor Romeo! He's already dead. He's been  
stabbed by a white girl's black eye. He's been cut  
through the ear with a love song. The center of  
his heart has been split by blind Cupid's arrow. Is  
he man enough at this point to face off with  
Tybalt?

**BENVOLIO**

Why, what's Tybalt's story?

**MERCUTIO**

He's tougher than the [Prince of Cats](#). He does  
everything by the book. He fights like you sing at  
a recital, paying attention to time, distance, and  
proportion. He takes the proper breaks: one, two,  
and the third in your heart. He's the butcher who  
can hit any silk button. A master of duels. He's a  
gentleman from the finest school of fencing. He  
knows how to turn any argument into a  
swordfight. [He knows](#) *passado*—the forward  
thrust—the *punto reverso*—the backhand thrust—  
and the *hai*—the thrust that goes straight through.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 2

**BENVOLIO**

15 The what?

**MERCUTIO**

The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasmies,  
these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good  
blade! A very tall man! A very good whore!" Why, is  
not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should

**BENVOLIO**

He knows what?

**MERCUTIO**

I hate these crazy, affected guys who use foreign  
phrases and newfangled expressions. I hate their  
strange manners and their weird accents! I hate it  
when they say, "By Jesus, this is a very good

## Original Text

be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these “pardon me’s,” who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? Oh, their bones, their bones!

Enter **ROMEO**

**BENVOLIO**

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

**MERCUTIO**

Without his roe, like a dried herring. O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in. Laura to his lady was but a kitchen-wench— marry, she had a better love to berhyme her—Dido a dowdy, Cleopatra a gypsy, Helen and Hero hildings and harlots, Thisbe a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose.— Signior Romeo, *bonjour!* There’s a French salutation to your French slop. You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 3

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

20 The slip, sir, the slip. Can you not conceive?

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

Meaning “to curtsy”?

**MERCUTIO**

Thou hast most kindly hit it.

**ROMEO**

25 A most courteous exposition.

**MERCUTIO**

Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

**ROMEO**

Pink for flower.

**MERCUTIO**

## Modern Text

blade, a very brave man, a very good whore.” Isn’t this a sad thing, my good man? Why should we put up with these foreign buzzards, these fashionmongers, these guys who say “pardon me,” these guys who care so much about manners that they can’t kick back on a bench without whining? “Oh, my aching bones!”

**ROMEO** enters.

**BENVOLIO**

Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo!

**MERCUTIO**

He looks skinny, like a dried herring without its eggs, and he hasn’t got his girl. O flesh, flesh, you’ve turned pale and weak like a fish. Now he’s ready for [Petrarch’s](#) poetry. Compared to Romeo’s girl, Laura was a kitchen slave. Surely she has a better love to make rhymes for her. Dido was shabbily dressed. Cleopatra was a gypsy girl. Helen and Hero were sluts and harlots. Thisbe might have had a blue eye or two, but that doesn’t matter. Signor Romeo, *bonjour*. There’s a French greeting that matches your drooping French-style pants. You faked us out pretty good last night.

**ROMEO**

Good morning to you both. What do you mean I faked you out?

**MERCUTIO**

You gave us the slip, sir, the slip. Can’t you understand what I’m saying?

**ROMEO**

Excuse me, good Mercutio. I had very important business to take care of. It was so important that I had to forget about courtesy and good manners.

**MERCUTIO**

In other words “important business” made you [flex your buttocks](#).

**ROMEO**

You mean do a curtsy?

**MERCUTIO**

You’ve hit the [target](#), sir.

**ROMEO**

That’s a very polite and courteous explanation.

**MERCUTIO**

Yes, I am the pink flower—the master, of courtesy and manners.

**ROMEO**

The [pink flower](#).

**MERCUTIO**

## Original Text

Right.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 4

**ROMEO**

Why, then is my pump well flowered.

**MERCUTIO**

- 30 Sure wit, follow me this jest now till thou hast worn out thy pump, that when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing solely singular.

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Come between us, good Benvolio. My wits faints.

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Nay, if our wits run the wild-goose chase, I am done, for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose?

**ROMEO**

- 35 Thou wast never with me for anything when thou wast not there for the goose.

**MERCUTIO**

I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

**ROMEO**

Nay, good goose, bite not.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

And is it not well served into a sweet goose?

**MERCUTIO**

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

## Modern Text

Right.

**ROMEO**

Well, then my pump is well decorated with flowers.

**MERCUTIO**

Alright my witty friend, this joke has worn out your pump. Its thin skin is all worn out. The joke is all you have left.

**ROMEO**

This is a bad joke. It's all silliness.

**MERCUTIO**

Come break this up, Benvolio. I'm losing this duel of wits.

**ROMEO**

Keep going, keep going, or I'll declare myself the winner.

**MERCUTIO**

Now, if our jokes go on a wild-goose chase, I'm finished. You have more wild goose in one of your jokes than I have in five of mine. Was I even close to you in the chase for the goose?

**ROMEO**

You were never with me for anything if you weren't there for the goose.

**MERCUTIO**

I'll bite you on the ear for that joke.

**ROMEO**

No, good goose, don't bite me.

**MERCUTIO**

Your joke is a very bitter apple. Your humor is a spicy sauce.

**ROMEO**

Then isn't it just the right dish for a sweet goose?

**MERCUTIO**

Oh, that's a joke made out of leather that spreads itself thin, from the width of an inch to as fat as a yard.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 5

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? Now art thou sociable. Now art thou Romeo. Now art thou what thou art—by art as well as by nature, for this driveling love is like a great natural that runs

**ROMEO**

I stretch my joke for that word "fat." If you add that word to the word "goose," it shows that you are a fat goose.

**MERCUTIO**

Why, isn't all this joking better than groaning about love? Now you're sociable. Now you're Romeo. Now you are what you've learned to be and what you are naturally. This love of yours

## Original Text

lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.

**BENVOLIO**

Stop there, stop there.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**BENVOLIO**

45 Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

**MERCUTIO**

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

*Enter NURSE and her man PETER*

**ROMEO**

Here's goodly gear.

**BENVOLIO**

A sail, a sail!

**MERCUTIO**

Two, two—a shirt and a smock.

**NURSE**

50 Peter!

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 6

**PETER**

Anon!

**NURSE**

My fan, Peter.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**NURSE**

God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

**MERCUTIO**

55 God ye good e'en, fair gentlewoman.

**NURSE**

Is it good e'en?

**MERCUTIO**

'Tis no less, I tell you, for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

**NURSE**

Out upon you! What a man are you?

**MERCUTIO**

One, gentlewoman, that God hath made, himself to mar.

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO**

I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older when

## Modern Text

was like a blithering idiot who runs up and down looking for a hole to hide his **toy** in.

**BENVOLIO**

Stop there, stop there.

**MERCUTIO**

You want me to stop my **tale** before I'm done.

**BENVOLIO**

Otherwise your tale would have gotten too long.

**MERCUTIO**

Oh, you're wrong. I would have made it short. I had come to the deepest part of my tale, and I planned to say nothing more on the topic.

*The NURSE enters with her servant, PETER.*

**ROMEO**

Here's something good.

**BENVOLIO**

**A sail, a sail!**

**MERCUTIO**

There's two—a man and a woman.

**NURSE**

Peter!

**PETER**

I'm at your service.

**NURSE**

Give me my fan, Peter.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**NURSE**

Good morning, gentlemen.

**MERCUTIO**

Good afternoon, fair lady.

**NURSE**

Is it now afternoon?

**MERCUTIO**

It's not earlier than that, I tell you. The **lusty hand** of the clock is now pricking noon.

**NURSE**

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

**MERCUTIO**

I'm a man, my lady, that God has made for himself to ruin.

**NURSE**

I swear, you speak the truth. "For himself to ruin," he says. Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I can find young Romeo?

**ROMEO**

I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older

## Original Text

you have found him than he was when you sought him. I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

**NURSE**

You say well.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 7

**MERCUTIO**

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

**NURSE**

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

**BENVOLIO**

65 She will indite him to some supper.

**MERCUTIO**

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

**ROMEO**

What hast thou found?

**MERCUTIO**

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

*(sings)*

*An old hare hoar,  
And an old hare hoar,  
Is very good meat in Lent.  
But a hare that is hoar  
Is too much for a score  
When it hoars ere it be spent.*

70 *(speaks)*

Romeo, will you come to your father's? We'll to dinner, thither.

**ROMEO**

I will follow you.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 8

**MERCUTIO**

Farewell, ancient lady. Farewell, lady, lady, lady.

*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO*

**NURSE**

I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this that was so full of his ropery?

**ROMEO**

75 A gentleman, Nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

**NURSE**

An he speak any thing against me, I'll take him down, an he were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks.

## Modern Text

when you find him than he was when you started looking for him. I am the youngest man by that name, because there is no one younger, or worse.

**NURSE**

You speak well.

**MERCUTIO**

Is the worst well? Very well taken, I believe, very wise.

**NURSE**

*(to ROMEO)* If you're the Romeo I'm looking for, sir, I would like to have a **confidence** with you.

**BENVOLIO**

She will **indite** him to some dinner party.

**MERCUTIO**

A pimp! A pimp! A pimp! I've found it out.

**ROMEO**

What have you found out?

**MERCUTIO**

She's not a prostitute unless she's using her ugliness to hide her promiscuity.

*(he walks by them and sings)*

*Old rabbit meat is good to eat,  
If you can't get anything else.  
But if it's so old,  
That it goes bad before you eat it,  
Then it was a waste of money.*

*(speaking)*

Romeo, are you going to your father's for lunch? Let's go there.

**ROMEO**

I'll follow after you.

**MERCUTIO**

**Goodbye, old lady. Goodbye, lady, lady, lady.**

*BENVOLIO and MERCUTIO exit.*

**NURSE**

Please tell me, sir, who was that foulmouthed punk who was so full of crude jokes?

**ROMEO**

Nurse, he's a man who likes to hear the sound of his own voice. He says more in one minute than he does in a whole month.

**NURSE**

If he says anything against me, I'll humble him, even if he were stronger than he is—and twenty

## Original Text

And if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills. I am none of his skains-mates. (to PETER) And thou must stand by, too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

**PETER**

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

**NURSE**

Now, afore God, I am so vexed that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! (to ROMEO) Pray you, sir, a word. And as I told you, my young lady bid me inquire you out. What she bade me say, I will keep to myself. But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say. For the gentlewoman is young, and therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

## Modern Text

punks like him. If I can't do it myself, I'll find someone who can. That dirty rat! I'm not one of his sluts. I'm not one of his punk friends who carries a knife. (to PETER) And you just stand there letting every jerk make fun of me for kicks.

**PETER**

I didn't see anybody use you for kicks. If I had seen something like that, I would have quickly pulled out my weapon. Believe me, I'll draw my sword as quick as any other man if I see a fight starting and the law is on my side.

**NURSE**

Now, I swear, I'm so angry that I'm shaking all over. That rotten scoundrel! (to ROMEO) Now, please, may I have a word with you, sir? My young mistress asked me to find you. What she asked me to say I'll keep to myself. But let me tell you this first. If you lead her into a fool's paradise, as the saying goes, it would be an outrageous crime because the girl is so young. And if you try to trick her, it would be an evil thing to do to any woman and very poor behavior.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 9

**ROMEO**

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

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO**

Bid her devise

85 Some means to come to shrift this afternoon. And there she shall at Friar Lawrence's cell Be shrived and married. (*gives her coins*) Here is for thy pains.

**NURSE**

No, truly, sir. Not a penny.

**ROMEO**

Go to. I say you shall.

**NURSE**

90 (*takes the money*) This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

**ROMEO**

And stay, good Nurse. Behind the abbey wall

**ROMEO**

Nurse, give my regards to to your lady. I swear to you—

**NURSE**

You have a good heart, and believe me, I'll tell her that. Lord, Lord, she'll be a happy woman.

**ROMEO**

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

**NURSE**

Sir, I'll tell her that you **protest** to her, which I think is the gentlemanly thing to do..

**ROMEO**

Tell her to devise a plan to get out of her house and come to confession at the abbey this afternoon. At Friar Lawrence's cell she can make confession and be married. (*giving her coins*) Here is a reward for your efforts.

**NURSE**

No, really, I won't take a penny.

**ROMEO**

Go on, I insist you take it.

**NURSE**

(*taking the money*) This afternoon, sir? She'll be there.

**ROMEO**

Wait good Nurse. Within an hour, one of my men



## Original Text

Within this hour my man shall be with thee  
 And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,  
 Which to the high top-gallant of my joy  
 95 Must be my convoy in the secret night.  
 Farewell. Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.  
 Farewell. Commend me to thy mistress.

## Modern Text

will come to you behind the abbey wall and give  
 you a rope ladder. I'll use the rope ladder to climb  
 over the walls at night. Then I'll meet Juliet  
 joyfully and in secret. Goodbye. Be honest and  
 helpful, and I'll repay you for your efforts.  
 Goodbye. Sing my praises to your mistress.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 10

**NURSE**

Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

**ROMEO**

What sayst thou, my dear Nurse?

**NURSE**

100 Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,  
 "Two may keep counsel, putting one away"?

**ROMEO**

Warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

**NURSE**

Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady.—Lord,  
 Lord! when 'twas a little prating thing.—Oh, there is a  
 nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay  
 knife aboard, but she, good soul, had as lief see a  
 toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes  
 and tell her that Paris is the properer man. But, I'll  
 warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any  
 clout in the versal world. Doth  
*notrosemary* and *Romeo* begin both with a letter?

**ROMEO**

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

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO**

Commend me to thy lady.

**NURSE**

Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

**PETER**

Anon!

**NURSE**

Before and apace.

**NURSE**

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

**ROMEO**

What do you have to say, my dear Nurse?

**NURSE**

Can your man keep a secret? Haven't you ever  
 heard the saying, "Two can conspire to put one  
 away"?

**ROMEO**

I assure you, my man is as true as steel.

**NURSE**

Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady. Lord,  
 Lord, when she was a little baby—Oh, there is  
 one nobleman in the city, a guy named Paris,  
 who would be happy to claim her as his own.  
 Juliet would rather look at a toad than at him. I  
 make her angry sometimes by saying that Paris  
 is more handsome than you are. But when I say  
 so, I swear she turns white as a sheet. Don't  
 "*rosemary*" and "*Romeo*" begin with the same  
 letter?

**ROMEO**

Yes, Nurse, what about that? They both begin  
 with the letter "*R*."

**NURSE**

Ah, you jokester—that's the dog's name. "*R*" is  
 for the—no, I know it begins with another letter.  
 She says the most beautiful things about you  
 and *rosemary*. It would be good for you to hear  
 the things she says.

**ROMEO**

Give my compliments to your lady.

**NURSE**

Yes, a thousand times. Peter!

**PETER**

I'm ready.

**NURSE**

(*giving PETER her fan*) Go ahead. Go quickly.

*Exeunt*

*They all exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 5

## Original Text

## Modern Text

*Enter JULIET**JULIET enters.***JULIET**

The clock struck nine when I did send the Nurse.  
 In half an hour she promised to return.  
 Perchance she cannot meet him. That's not so.  
 Oh, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,  
 5 Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,  
 Driving back shadows over louring hills.  
 Therefore do nimble-pinioned doves draw love  
 And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.  
 Now is the sun upon the highmost hill  
 10 Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve  
 Is three long hours, yet she is not come.  
 Had she affections and warm youthful blood,  
 She would be as swift in motion as a ball.  
 My words would bandy her to my sweet love,  
 15 And his to me.  
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead,  
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy, and pale as lead.

**JULIET**

I sent the Nurse at nine o'clock. Maybe she can't find him. That can't be. Oh, she's slow! Love's messengers should be thoughts, which fly ten times faster than sunbeams. They should be strong enough to push shadows over the dark hills. That's the way doves carry Venus so fast, and that's why Cupid has wings that let him fly as fast as the wind. Now it's noon. That's three hours since nine o'clock, but she hasn't come back. If she was young and passionate, she'd move as fast as a ball. My words would bounce her to my sweet love, and his words would bounce her back to me. But a lot of old people act like they're already dead—sluggish, slow, fat, and colorless, like lead.

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

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

Oh my God, here she comes! Oh sweet Nurse, what news do you bring? Have you spoken to him? Send your man away.

**NURSE**

20 Peter, stay at the gate.

**NURSE**

Peter, wait for me at the gate.

*Exit PETER**PETER exits.***JULIET**

Now, good sweet Nurse— O Lord, why look'st thou sad?  
 Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily.  
 If good, thou shamest the music of sweet news  
 By playing it to me with so sour a face.

**JULIET**

Now, good sweet Nurse—Oh Lord, why do you look so sad? Even if the news is sad, tell me with a smile on your face. If the news is good, you're ruining the sweet news by playing a trick with a sour face like that.

## Act 2, Scene 5, Page 2

**NURSE**

25 I am weary. Give me leave awhile.  
 Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I!

**NURSE**

I am tired. Leave me alone for a minute. Oh my, my bones ache so much. I've been running all over the place.

**JULIET**

I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news.  
 Nay, come, I pray thee, speak. Good, good Nurse, speak.

**JULIET**

I wish you had my bones, and I had your news. Come on now, I beg you, speak, good Nurse, speak.

**NURSE**

Jesu, what haste! Can you not stay awhile?  
 30 Do you not see that I am out of breath?

**NURSE**

Sweet Jesus, you're in such a hurry! Can't you wait for a moment? Don't you see that I'm out of breath?

**JULIET**

How art thou out of breath when thou hast breath  
 To say to me that thou art out of breath?  
 The excuse that thou dost make in this delay  
 Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.  
 35 Is thy news good, or bad? Answer to that.

**JULIET**

How can you be out of breath when you have enough breath to tell me that you're out of breath? The excuse you make to delay the news is longer than the news itself. Is the news good or bad? Answer that question. Tell me if it's good or

**Original Text**

Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance.  
Let me be satisfied. Is 't good or bad?

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

No, no. But all this did I know before.

40 What says he of our marriage? What of that?

**NURSE**

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

My back a' t' other side. Ah, my back, my back!  
Beshrew your heart for sending me about,

45 To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

**Modern Text**

bad, and I'll wait for the details. Tell me so I can be satisfied. Is it good or bad?

**NURSE**

Well, you have made a foolish choice. You don't know how to pick a man. Romeo? No, not him, though his face is more handsome than any man's, and his legs are prettier, and as for his hands and feet and body, they're not much to speak of, and yet they're beyond compare. He's not the most polite man in the world, but, believe me, he's gentle as a lamb. Well, do what you want. Be good. Have you had lunch yet?

**JULIET**

No, I haven't had lunch. Everything you told me I already knew. What does he say about our marriage? What about that?

**NURSE**

Lord, what a headache I've got! My head is pounding. It feels like it'll break into twenty pieces. My back aches too—(JULIET *rubs her back*) Ooh, on the other side—ah, my poor aching back! Curse your heart for sending me running all over town. I could get sick and die.

**Act 2, Scene 5, Page 3****JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

O God's lady dear,  
55 Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow.  
Is this the poultice for my aching bones?  
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

**JULIET**

60 I have.

**NURSE****JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

Oh holy Mary, mother of God! Are you this impatient? Come on, you're being ridiculous! Is this the cure for my aching bones? From now on, take care of your messages yourself.

**JULIET**

You're making such a fuss. Come on, what did Romeo say?

**NURSE**

Do you have permission to go out and take confession today?

**JULIET**

I do.

**NURSE**

**Original Text**

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

**Modern Text**

Then hurry up and rush over to Friar Lawrence's cell. There's a husband there who's waiting to make you his wife. Now I see the blood rushing to your cheeks. You blush bright red as soon as you hear any news. Go to the church. I must go by a different path to get a rope ladder. Your love will use it to climb up to your window while it's dark. I do the drudge work for your pleasure. But soon you'll be doing a wife's work all night long. Go. I'll go to lunch. You go to Friar Lawrence's cell.

**Act 2, Scene 5, Page 4****JULIET**

Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

*Exeunt*

**JULIET**

Wish me luck. Thank you, dear Nurse.

*They exit.*

**Act 2, Scene 6**

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

So smile the heavens upon this holy act  
 That after-hours with sorrow chide us not.

**ROMEO**

Amen, amen. But come what sorrow can,  
 It cannot countervail the exchange of joy  
 5 That one short minute gives me in her sight.  
 Do thou but close our hands with holy words,  
 Then love-devouring death do what he dare;  
 It is enough I may but call her mine.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

These violent delights have violent ends  
 10 And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,  
 Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey  
 Is loathsome in his own deliciousness  
 And in the taste confounds the appetite.  
 Therefore love moderately. Long love doth so.  
 15 Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

*Enter JULIET, somewhat fast, and embraceth ROMEO*

Here comes the lady. Oh, so light a foot  
 Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.  
 A lover may bestride the gossamers  
 That idles in the wanton summer air,  
 20 And yet not fall. So light is vanity.

**JULIET**

Good even to my ghostly confessor.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

*FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO enter.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

May the heavens be happy with this holy act of marriage, so nothing unfortunate happens later to make us regret it.

**ROMEO**

Amen, amen. But whatever misfortunes occur, they can't ruin the joy I feel with one look at her. All you have to do is join our hands with holy words, then love-destroying death can do whatever it pleases. It's enough for me if I can call her mine.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

These sudden joys have sudden endings. They burn up in victory like fire and gunpowder. When they meet, as in a kiss, they explode. Too much honey is delicious, but it makes you sick to your stomach. Therefore, love each other in moderation. That is the key to long-lasting love. Too fast is as bad as too slow.

*JULIET enters in a rush and embraces ROMEO.*

Here comes the lady. Oh, a footstep as light as hers will never endure the rocky road of life. Lovers are so light they can walk on a spiderweb floating on a summer breeze, and yet not fall. That's how flimsy and unreal pleasure is.

**JULIET**

Good evening, my spiritual confessor.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Romeo will thank you, my girl, for both of us.

**Act 2, Scene 6, Page 2**

## Original Text

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy

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

**JULIET**

- 30 Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,  
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament.  
They are but beggars that can count their worth.  
But my true love is grown to such excess  
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

- 35 Come, come with me, and we will make short work.  
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone  
Till holy church incorporate two in one.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

**JULIET**

I'll give him equal thanks, so we're even.

**ROMEO**

Ah, Juliet if you're as happy as I am, and you're better with words, tell me about the happiness you imagine we'll have in our marriage.

**JULIET**

I can imagine more than I can say—I have more on my mind than words. Anyone who can count how much he has is poor. My true love has made me so rich that I can't count even half of my wealth.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Come, come with me, and we'll do the job quickly. Because if you don't mind, I'm not leaving you two alone until you're united in marriage.

*They exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 1

*Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, Mercutio's PAGE, and others*

**BENVOLIO**

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.  
The day is hot; the Capulets, abroad;  
And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,  
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

**MERCUTIO**

- 5 Thou art like one of those fellows that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table and says "God send me no need of thee!" and, by the operation of the second cup, draws it on the drawer when indeed there is no need.

**BENVOLIO**

Am I like such a fellow?

**MERCUTIO**

Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy, and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.

**BENVOLIO**

And what to?

**MERCUTIO**

Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou, why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but

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

**BENVOLIO**

I'm begging you, good Mercutio, let's call it a day. It's hot outside, and the Capulets are wandering around. If we bump into them, we'll certainly get into a fight. When it's hot outside, people become angry and hot-blooded.

**MERCUTIO**

You're like one of those guys who walks into a bar, slams his sword on the table, and then says, "I pray I never have to use you." By the time he orders his second drink, he pulls his sword on the bartender for no reason at all.

**BENVOLIO**

Am I really like one of those guys?

**MERCUTIO**

Come on, you can be as angry as any guy in Italy when you're in the mood. When someone does the smallest thing to make you angry, you get angry. And when you're in the mood to get angry, you find something to get angry about.

**BENVOLIO**

And what about that?

**MERCUTIO**

If there were two men like you, pretty soon there'd be none because the two of you would kill each other. You would fight with a man if he had one more whisker or one less whisker in his beard than you have in your beard. You'll fight with a

## Original Text

because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarreling. Thou hast quarreled with a man for coughing in the street because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? With another, for tying his new shoes with old ribbon? And yet thou wilt tutor me from quarreling!

## Modern Text

man who's cracking nuts just because you have hazelnut-colored eyes. Only you would look for a fight like that. Your head is as full of fights as an egg is full of yolk, but your head has been beaten like scrambled eggs from so much fighting. You started a fight with a man who coughed in the street because he woke up a dog that was sleeping in the sun. Didn't you argue it out with your tailor for wearing one of his new suits before the right season? And with another for tying the new shoes he made with old laces? And yet you're the one who wants to teach me about restraint!

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

**BENVOLIO**

- 10 An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

**MERCUTIO**

The fee simple? O simple!

*Enter TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and other CAPULETS*

**BENVOLIO**

By my head, here comes the Capulets.

**MERCUTIO**

By my heel, I care not.

**TYBALT**

Follow me close, for I will speak to them.

- 15 Gentlemen, good e'en. A word with one of you.

**MERCUTIO**

And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something. Make it a word and a blow.

**TYBALT**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Could you not take some occasion without giving?

**TYBALT**

Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo.

**BENVOLIO**

If I were in the habit of fighting the way you are, my life insurance rates would be sky high.

**MERCUTIO**

Your life insurance? That's foolish.

*TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and CAPULETS enter.*

**BENVOLIO**

Oh great, here come the Capulets.

**MERCUTIO**

Well, well, I don't care.

**TYBALT**

*(to PETRUCCIO and others)* Follow me closely, I'll talk to them. *(to the MONTAGUES)* Good afternoon, gentlemen. I'd like to have a word with one of you.

**MERCUTIO**

You just want one word with one of us? Put it together with something else. Make it a word and a blow.

**TYBALT**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Can't you find a reason without my giving you one?

**TYBALT**

Mercutio, you hang out with Romeo.

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

**MERCUTIO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

"Hang out?" Who do you think we are, musicians in a band? If we look like musicians to you, you can expect to hear nothing but noise. *(touching the blade of his sword)* This is my fiddlestick. I'll use it to make you dance. Goddammit—"Hang

## Original Text

**BENVOLIO**

We talk here in the public haunt of men.  
 Either withdraw unto some private place,  
 And reason coldly of your grievances,  
 Or else depart. Here all eyes gaze on us.

**MERCUTIO**

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

*Enter ROMEO*

**TYBALT**

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

**MERCUTIO**

- But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery.  
 Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower.  
 30 Your worship in that sense may call him "man."

**TYBALT**

Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford  
 No better term than this: thou art a villain.

**ROMEO**

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

**TYBALT**

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

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 4

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

- O calm dishonourable, vile submission!  
 45 *Alla stoccata* carries it away. (*draws his sword*)  
 Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?

**TYBALT**

What wouldst thou have with me?

**MERCUTIO**

Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives,  
 that I mean to make bold withal, and, as you shall  
 use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the eight. Will  
 you pluck your sword out of his pilcher by the ears?  
 Make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be  
 out.

**TYBALT**

## Modern Text

out!"

**BENVOLIO**

We're talking here in a public place. Either go  
 someplace private, or talk it over rationally, or  
 else just go away. Out here everybody can see  
 us.

**MERCUTIO**

Men's eyes were made to see things, so let them  
 watch. I won't move to please anybody.

*ROMEO enters.*

**TYBALT**

Well, may peace be with you. Here comes my  
 man, the man I'm looking for.

**MERCUTIO**

He's not your man. Alright, walk out into a field,  
 and he'll chase you. In that sense you can call  
 him your "man."

**TYBALT**

Romeo, there's only one thing I can call you.  
 You're a villain.

**ROMEO**

Tybalt, I have a reason to love you that lets me  
 put aside the rage I should feel and excuse that  
 insult. I am no villain. So, goodbye. I can tell that  
 you don't know who I am.

**TYBALT**

Boy, your words can't excuse the harm you've  
 done to me. So now turn and draw your sword.

**ROMEO**

I disagree. I've never done you harm. I love you  
 more than you can understand until you know the  
 reason why I love you. And so, good Capulet—  
 which is a name I love like my own name—you  
 should be satisfied with what I say.

**MERCUTIO**

This calm submission is dishonorable and vile.  
 The thrust of a sword will end this  
 surrender. (*draws his sword*) Tybalt, you rat-  
 catcher, will you go fight me?

**TYBALT**

What do you want from me?

**MERCUTIO**

Good King of Cats, I want to take one of your  
 nine lives. I'll take one, and, depending on how  
 you treat me after that, I might beat the other  
 eight out of you too. Will you pull your sword out  
 of its sheath? Hurry up, or I'll smack you on the  
 ears with my sword before you have yours drawn.

**TYBALT**

## Original Text

I am for you. (*draws his sword*)

**ROMEO**

50 Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

**MERCUTIO**

Come, sir, your *passado*.

*MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight*

**ROMEO**

(*draws his sword*) Draw, Benvolio. Beat down their weapons.

Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage.

55 Tybalt, Mercutio! The Prince expressly hath forbidden bandying in Verona streets.

Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

## Modern Text

I'll fight you. (*he draws his sword*)

**ROMEO**

Noble Mercutio, put your sword away.

**MERCUTIO**

(*to TYBALT*) Come on, sir, perform your forward thrust, your *passado*.

*MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight*

(*drawing his sword*) Draw your sword, Benvolio.

Let's beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, stop this disgraceful fight. Tybalt, Mercutio, the Prince has banned fighting in the streets of Verona.

Stop, Tybalt. Stop, good Mercutio.

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 5

*ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT stabs MERCUTIO under ROMEO's arm*

**PETRUCHIO**

Away, Tybalt.

*Exeunt TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS*

**MERCUTIO**

I am hurt.

A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.

60 Is he gone and hath nothing?

**BENVOLIO**

What, art thou hurt?

**MERCUTIO**

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

*Exit MERCUTIO'S PAGE*

**ROMEO**

Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much.

**MERCUTIO**

65 No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church-door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rogue, a villain that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

**ROMEO**

I thought all for the best.

*ROMEO tries to break up the fight. TYBALT Treaches under ROMEO's arm and stabs MERCUTIO.*

**PETRUCHIO**

Let's get away, Tybalt.

*TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and the other CAPULETS exit.*

**MERCUTIO**

I've been hurt. May a plague curse both your families. I'm finished. Did he get away clean?

**BENVOLIO**

What, are you hurt?

**MERCUTIO**

Yes, yes. It's a scratch, just a scratch. But it's enough. Where is my page? Go, boy. Get me a doctor.

*MERCUTIO'S PAGE exits.*

**ROMEO**

Have courage, man. The wound can't be that bad.

**MERCUTIO**

No, it's not as deep as a well, or as wide as a church door, but it's enough. It'll do the job. Ask for me tomorrow, and you'll find me in a grave. I'm done for in this world, I believe. May a plague strike both your houses. Goddammit! I can't believe that dog, that rat, that mouse, that cat could scratch me to death! That braggart, punk villain who fights like he learned swordsmanship from a manual! Why the hell did you come in between us? He struck me from under your arm.

**ROMEO**

I thought it was the right thing to do.



## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 6

**MERCUTIO**

Help me into some house, Benvolio,  
Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses!  
They have made worms' meat of me. I have it,  
70 And soundly too. Your houses!

*Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO*

**ROMEO**

This gentleman, the Prince's near ally,  
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt  
In my behalf. My reputation stained  
With Tybalt's slander.—Tybalt, that an hour  
75 Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet,  
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate  
And in my temper softened valor's steel!

*Enter BENVOLIO*

**BENVOLIO**

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

**ROMEO**

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

*Enter TYBALT*

**BENVOLIO**

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

**ROMEO**

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

**MERCUTIO**

Take me inside some house, Benvolio, or I'll pass  
out. May a plague strike both your families!  
They've turned me into food for worms. I'm done  
for. Curse your families!

*MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO exit.*

**ROMEO**

This gentleman Mercutio, a close relative of the  
Prince and my dear friend, was killed while  
defending me from Tybalt's slander—Tybalt, who  
had been my cousin for a whole hour! Oh, sweet  
Juliet, your beauty has made me weak like a  
woman, and you have softened my bravery,  
which before was as hard as steel.

*BENVOLIO enters.*

**BENVOLIO**

Oh Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead! His  
brave spirit has floated up to heaven, but it was  
too early for him to leave life on earth.

**ROMEO**

The future will be affected by today's terrible  
events. Today is the start of a terror that will end  
in the days ahead.

*TYBALT enters.*

**BENVOLIO**

Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

**ROMEO**

He's alive and victorious, and Mercutio's dead?  
Enough with mercy and consideration. It's time  
for rage to guide my actions. Now, Tybalt, you  
can call me "villain" the way you did before.  
Mercutio's soul is floating right above our heads.  
He's waiting for you to keep him company on the  
way up to heaven. Either you, or I, or both of us  
have to go with him.

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 7

**TYBALT**

Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here  
Shalt with him hence.

**ROMEO**

This shall determine that.

*They fight. TYBALT falls*

**BENVOLIO**

Romeo, away, be gone!  
95 The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.  
Stand not amazed. The Prince will doom thee death  
If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

**ROMEO**

Oh, I am fortune's fool!

**TYBALT**

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

**ROMEO**

This fight will decide who dies.

*They fight. TYBALT falls and dies*

**BENVOLIO**

Romeo, get out of here. The citizens are around,  
and Tybalt is dead. Don't stand there shocked.  
The Prince will give you the death penalty if you  
get caught. So get out of here!

**ROMEO**

Oh, I have awful luck.

## Original Text

**BENVOLIO**

Why dost thou stay?

*Exit ROMEO**Enter CITIZENS OF THE WATCH***CITIZEN OF THE WATCH**

Which way ran he that killed Mercutio?

100 Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

**BENVOLIO**

There lies that Tybalt.

**CITIZEN OF THE WATCH***(to TYBALT)* Up, sir, go with me.

I charge thee in the Prince's name, obey.

*Enter PRINCE, MONTAGUE, CAPULET, LADY MONTAGUE, LADY CAPULET, and OTHERS*

## Modern Text

**BENVOLIO**

Why are you waiting?

*ROMEO exits.**The CITIZENS OF THE WATCH enter.***CITIZEN OF THE WATCH**

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

**BENVOLIO**

Tybalt is lying over there.

**CITIZEN OF THE WATCH***(to TYBALT)* Get up, sir, and come with me. I command you, by the authority of the Prince, to obey me.*The PRINCE enters with MONTAGUE, CAPULET, LADY MONTAGUE, LADY CAPULET, and OTHERS.*

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 8

**PRINCE**

Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

**BENVOLIO**105 O noble prince, I can discover all  
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl.  
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,  
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.**LADY CAPULET**

Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!

110 O Prince! O cousin! Husband! Oh, the blood is  
spilled  
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,  
For blood of ours shed blood of Montague.  
O cousin, cousin!**PRINCE**

Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

**BENVOLIO**Tybalt here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay.  
115 Romeo, that spoke him fair, bade him bethink  
How nice the quarrel was and urged withal  
Your high displeasure. All this uttered  
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bowed,  
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen  
120 Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts  
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,  
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,  
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats  
Cold death aside and with the other sends  
125 It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity,  
Retorts it. Romeo, he cries aloud,  
"Hold, friends! Friends, part!" and, swifter than his  
tongue,  
His agile arm beats down their fatal points,**PRINCE**

Where are the evil men who started this fight?

**BENVOLIO**Oh, noble prince, I can tell you everything about  
the unfortunate circumstances of this deadly  
fight. Over there Tybalt is lying dead. He killed  
your relative, brave Mercutio, and then young  
Romeo killed him.**LADY CAPULET**Tybalt was my nephew! He was my brother's  
son! Oh Prince, oh nephew, oh husband! Oh, my  
nephew is dead! Oh Prince, as you are a man of  
honor, take revenge for this murder by killing  
someone from the Montague family. Oh cousin,  
cousin!**PRINCE**

Benvolio, who started this fight?

**BENVOLIO**Tybalt started the fight before he was killed by  
Romeo. Romeo spoke to Tybalt politely and told  
him how silly this argument was. He mentioned  
that you would not approve of the fight. He said  
all of this gently and calmly, kneeling down out of  
respect. But he could not make peace with  
Tybalt, who was in an angry mood and wouldn't  
listen to talk about peace. Tybalt and Mercutio  
began to fight each other fiercely, lunging at one  
another and dodging each other's blows. Romeo  
cried out, "Stop, my friends. Break it up." Then he  
jumped in between them and forced them to put  
their swords down. But Tybalt reached under  
Romeo's arm and thrust his sword into brave  
Mercutio. Then Tybalt fled the scene.

**Original Text****Modern Text**

130 And 'twixt them rushes—underneath whose arm  
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life  
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled.

**Act 3, Scene 1, Page 9**

But by and by comes back to Romeo,  
Who had but newly entertained revenge,  
And to 't they go like lightning, for ere I  
135 Could draw to part them was stout Tybalt slain.  
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.  
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

**LADY CAPULET**

He is a kinsman to the Montague.  
Affection makes him false. He speaks not true.  
140 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,  
And all those twenty could but kill one life.  
I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give.  
Romeo slew Tybalt. Romeo must not live.

**PRINCE**

Romeo slew him; he slew Mercutio.  
145 Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

**MONTAGUE**

Not Romeo, Prince, he was Mercutio's friend.  
His fault concludes but what the law should end,  
The life of Tybalt.

**PRINCE**

And for that offence  
Immediately we do exile him hence.  
150 I have an interest in your hearts' proceeding.  
My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding.  
But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine  
That you shall all repent the loss of mine.  
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses.  
155 Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses,  
Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste,  
Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.  
Bear hence this body and attend our will.  
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

*Exeunt**They exit.*

But pretty soon he came back to meet Romeo,  
who was overcome with the desire for revenge.  
As quick as lightning, they started fighting.  
Before I could break up the fight, Tybalt was  
killed. Romeo ran away when Tybalt fell dead.  
I'm telling you the truth, I swear on my life.

**LADY CAPULET**

Benvolio is part of the Montague family. His  
loyalties to the Montagues make him tell lies.  
He's not telling the truth. There were twenty  
Montagues fighting in this awful riot, and together  
those twenty could only kill one man. I demand  
justice. You, Prince, are the man who can give  
me justice. Romeo killed Tybalt. Romeo must  
die.

**PRINCE**

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

**MONTAGUE**

Not Romeo, Prince. He was Mercutio's friend.  
His crime did justice's job by taking Tybalt's life.

**PRINCE**

And for that crime, Romeo is hereby exiled from  
Verona. I'm involved in your rivalry. Mercutio was  
my relative, and he lies dead because of your  
bloody feud. I'll punish you so harshly that you'll  
regret causing me this loss. I won't listen to your  
pleas or excuses. You can't get out of trouble by  
praying or crying, so don't bother. Tell Romeo to  
leave the city immediately, or else, if he is found,  
he will be killed. Take away this body, and do  
what I say. Showing mercy by pardoning killers  
only causes more murders.

**Act 3, Scene 2***Enter JULIET alone**JULIET enters alone.*

**JULIET**  
Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,  
Toward Phoebus' lodging. Such a wagoner  
As Phaeton would whip you to the west  
And bring in cloudy night immediately.  
5 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,  
That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo  
Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.

I wish the sun would hurry up and set and night  
would come immediately. When the night comes  
and everyone goes to sleep, Romeo will leap into  
my arms, and no one will know. Beauty makes it  
possible for lovers to see how to make love in the  
dark. Or else love is blind, and its best time is the  
night. I wish night would come, like a widow  
dressed in black, so I can learn how to submit to

## Original Text

Lovers can see to do their amorous rites  
 By their own beauties, or, if love be blind,  
 10 It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,  
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
 And learn me how to lose a winning match  
 Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.  
 Hood my unmanned blood bating in my cheeks,  
 15 With thy black mantle, till strange love, grow bold,  
 Think true love acted simple modesty.  
 Come, night. Come, Romeo. Come, thou day in  
 night,  
 For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
 20 Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.  
 Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed  
 night,  
 Give me my Romeo. And when I shall die,  
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
 25 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.  
 Oh, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
 But not possessed it, and though I am sold,  
 30 Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day  
 As is the night before some festival  
 To an impatient child that hath new robes  
 And may not wear them.

## Modern Text

my husband and lose my virginity. Let the blood  
 rushing to my cheeks be calmed. In the darkness,  
 let me, a shy virgin, learn the strange act of sex  
 so that it seems innocent, modest, and true.  
 Come, night. Come, Romeo. You're like a day  
 that comes during the night. You're whiter than  
 snow on the black wings of a raven. Come, gentle  
 night. Come, loving, dark night. Give me my  
 Romeo. And when I die, turn him into stars and  
 form a constellation in his image. His face will  
 make the heavens so beautiful that the world will  
 fall in love with the night and forget about the  
 garish sun. Oh, I have bought love's mansion, but  
 I haven't moved in yet. I belong to Romeo now,  
 but he hasn't taken possession of me yet. This  
 day is so boring that I feel like a child on the night  
 before a holiday, waiting to put on my fancy new  
 clothes.

## Act 3, Scene 2, Page 2

*Enter NURSE with cords*

*The NURSE enters with the rope ladder in her  
 pouch.*

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

**NURSE**

Ay, ay, the cords.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

Ah, welladay! He's dead, he's dead, he's dead!  
 We are undone, lady, we are undone!

40 Alack the day! He's gone, he's killed, he's dead!

**JULIET**

Can heaven be so envious?

**NURSE**

Romeo can,  
 Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo!  
 Who ever would have thought it? Romeo!

**JULIET**

Oh, here comes my Nurse, and she brings news.  
 Every voice that mentions Romeo's name sounds  
 beautiful. Now, Nurse, what's the news? Is that  
 the rope ladder Romeo told you to pick up?

**NURSE**

Yes, yes, this is the rope ladder.

**JULIET**

Oh my, what's the news? Why do you look so  
 upset?

**NURSE**

Oh, it's a sad day! He's dead. He's dead. He's  
 dead! We're ruined, lady, we're ruined! What an  
 awful day! He's gone. He's been killed. He's  
 dead!

**JULIET**

Can God be so jealous and hateful?

**NURSE**

Romeo is hateful, even though God isn't. Oh,  
 Romeo, Romeo, who ever would have thought it  
 would be Romeo?

**JULIET**

## Original Text

- What devil art thou that dost torment me thus?  
 45 This torture should be roared in dismal hell.  
 Hath Romeo slain himself? Say thou but “ay,”  
 And that bare vowel / shall poison more  
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice.  
 I am not I if there be such an /,  
 50 Or those eyes shut that makes thee answer “ay.”  
 If he be slain, say “ay,” or if not, “no.”  
 Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

**NURSE**

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

## Act 3, Scene 2, Page 3

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

- O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!  
 75 Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
 Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!  
 Dove-feathered raven, wolvish-ravens lamb!  
 Despisèd substance of divinest show,  
 Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st.  
 80 A damnèd saint, an honorable villain!  
 O nature, what hadst thou to do in hell

## Modern Text

What kind of devil are you to torture me like this?  
 This is as bad as the tortures of hell. Has Romeo  
 killed himself? Just say “Yes” and I will turn more  
 poisonous than the snake with the evil eye. I will  
 no longer be myself if you tell me Romeo killed  
 himself. If he's been killed, say “Yes.” If not, say  
 “No.” These short words will determine my joy or  
 my pain.

**NURSE**

I saw the wound. I saw it with my own eyes. God  
 bless that wound, here on his manly chest. A  
 pitiful corpse, a bloody, pitiful corpse.  
 Pale as ashes and drenched in blood. All the  
 dried blood was so gory. I fainted when I saw it.

**JULIET**

Oh, my heart is breaking. Oh, my bankrupt heart  
 is breaking. I'll send my eyes to prison, and they'll  
 never be free to look at anything again. I'll give  
 my vile body back to the earth. I'll never move  
 again. My body and Romeo's will lie together in  
 one sad coffin.

**NURSE**

Oh, Tybalt, Tybalt, he was the best friend I had.  
 Oh, polite Tybalt, he was an honorable  
 gentleman. I wish I had not lived long enough to  
 see him die.

**JULIET**

What disaster is this? Has Romeo been killed,  
 and is Tybalt dead too? Tybalt was my dearest  
 cousin. Romeo was even dearer to me as my  
 husband. Let the trumpets play the song of doom,  
 because who can be alive if those two are gone?

**NURSE**

Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished.  
 Romeo killed Tybalt, and his punishment was  
 banishment.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

It did, it did. Curse the day this happened, but it  
 did.

**JULIET**

Oh, he's like a snake disguised as a flower. Did a  
 dragon ever hide in such a beautiful cave? He's a  
 beautiful tyrant and a fiendish angel! He's a raven  
 with the feathers of the dove. He's a lamb who  
 hunts like a wolf! I hate him, yet he seemed the  
 most wonderful man. He's turned out to be the  
 exact opposite of what he seemed. He's a saint  
 who should be damned. He's a villain who

**Original Text**

When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend  
 In moral paradise of such sweet flesh?  
 Was ever book containing such vile matter  
 85 So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell  
 In such a gorgeous palace!

**Act 3, Scene 2, Page 4****NURSE**

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

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

**JULIET**

Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?  
 Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy  
 100 name,  
 When I, thy three hours' wife, have mangled it?  
 But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?  
 That villain cousin would have killed my husband.  
 Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring.  
 105 Your tributary drops belong to woe,  
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.  
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain,  
 And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my  
 husband.  
 110 All this is comfort. Wherefore weep I then?  
 Some word there was, worsè than Tybalt's death,  
 That murdered me. I would forget it fain,  
 But oh, it presses to my memory,  
 Like damnèd guilty deeds to sinners' minds.  
 "Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd."

**Act 3, Scene 2, Page 5**

That "banishèd," that one word "banishèd"  
 115 Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death  
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there.  
 Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship  
 And needly will be ranked with other griefs,

**Modern Text**

seemed honorable. Oh nature, what were you  
 doing in hell? Why did you put the soul of a  
 criminal in the perfect body of a man? Was there  
 ever such an evil book with such a beautiful  
 cover? Oh, I can't believe the deepest evil lurked  
 inside something so beautiful!

**NURSE**

There is no trust, no faith, no honesty in men. All  
 of them lie. All of them cheat. They're all wicked.  
 Ah, where's my servant?—Give me some  
 brandy.—These griefs, these pains, these  
 sorrows make me old. Shame on Romeo!

**JULIET**

I hope sores cover your tongue for a wish like  
 that! He was not born to be shameful. Shame  
 does not belong with Romeo. He deserves only  
 honor, complete honor. Oh, I was such a beast  
 to be angry at him.

**NURSE**

Are you going to say good things about the man  
 who killed your cousin?

**JULIET**

Am I supposed to say bad things about my own  
 husband? Ah, my poor husband, who will sing  
 your praises when I, your wife of three hours,  
 have been saying awful things about you? But  
 why, you villain, did you kill my cousin? Probably  
 because my cousin the villain would have killed  
 my husband. I'm not going to cry any tears. I  
 would cry with joy that Romeo is alive, but I  
 should cry tears of grief because Tybalt is dead.  
 My husband, whom Tybalt wanted to kill, is alive.  
 Tybalt, who wanted to kill my husband, is dead.  
 All this is comforting news. Why, then, should I  
 cry? There is news worse than the news that  
 Tybalt is dead, news that makes me want to die.  
 I would be glad to forget about it, but it weighs on  
 my memory like sins linger in guilty minds.  
 "Tybalt is dead, and Romeo has been banished."

That banishment is worse than the murder of ten  
 thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death would be bad  
 enough if that was all. Maybe pain likes to have  
 company and can't come without bringing more  
 pain. It would have been better if, after she said,

**Original Text**

Why followed not, when she said "Tybalt's dead,"  
 120 "Thy father" or "thy mother," nay, or both,  
 Which modern lamentations might have moved?  
 But with a rearward following Tybalt's death,  
 "Romeo is banishèd." To speak that word,  
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,  
 125 All slain, all dead. "Romeo is banishèd."  
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,  
 In that word's death. No words can that woe sound.  
 Where is my father and my mother, Nurse?

**NURSE**

Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse.  
 130 Will you go to them? I will bring you thither.

**JULIET**

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

**NURSE**

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

**Modern Text**

"Tybalt's dead," she told me my mother or my  
 father, or both, were gone. That would have  
 made me make the normal cries of sadness. But  
 to say that Tybalt's dead and then say, "Romeo  
 has been banished." To say that is like saying  
 that my father, my mother, Tybalt, Romeo, and  
 Juliet have all been killed, they're all dead.  
 "Romeo has been banished." That news brings  
 infinite death. No words can express the pain.  
 Where are my father and my mother, Nurse?

**NURSE**

They are crying and moaning over Tybalt's  
 corpse. Are you going to join them? I'll bring you  
 there.

**JULIET**

Are they washing out his wounds with their  
 tears? I'll cry my tears for Romeo's banishment  
 when their tears are dry. Pick up this rope ladder.  
 This poor rope ladder, it's useless now, just like  
 me, because Romeo has been exiled. He made  
 this rope ladder to be a highway to my bed, but I  
 am a virgin, and I will die a virgin and a widow.  
 Let's go, rope ladder. Nurse, I'm going to lie in  
 my wedding bed. And death, not Romeo, can  
 take my virginity!

**NURSE**

Go to your bedroom. I'll find Romeo to comfort  
 you. I know where he is. Listen, your Romeo will  
 be here tonight. I'll go to him. He's hiding out in  
 Friar Lawrence's cell.

**Act 3, Scene 2, Page 6****JULIET**

*(gives the NURSE a ring)* O, find him! Give this ring to  
 my true knight,  
 And bid him come to take his last farewell.

*Exeunt***JULIET**

*(giving her a ring)* Oh, find him! Give this ring to  
 my true knight! And tell him to come here to say  
 his last goodbye.

*They exit.***Act 3, Scene 3***Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE***FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

*Enter ROMEO***ROMEO**

Father, what news? What is the Prince's doom?  
 5 What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand  
 That I yet know not?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Too familiar

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

Romeo, come out. Come out, you frightened  
 man. Trouble likes you, and you're married to  
 disaster.

*ROMEO enters.***ROMEO**

Father, what's the news? What punishment did  
 the Prince announce? What suffering lies in store  
 for me that I don't know about yet?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

You know too much about suffering. I have news

**Original Text**

Is my dear son with such sour company.  
I bring thee tidings of the Prince's doom.

**ROMEO**

What less than doomsday is the Prince's doom?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

- 10 A gentler judgment vanished from his lips:  
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

**ROMEO**

Ha, banishment! Be merciful, say "death,"  
For exile hath more terror in his look,  
Much more than death. Do not say "banishment."

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

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

**ROMEO**

There is no world without Verona walls  
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.  
Hence "banishèd" is banished from the world,

- 20 And world's exile is death. Then "banishèd,"

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 2**

Is death mistermed. Calling death "banishment,"  
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden ax  
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!

- 25 Thy fault our law calls death, but the kind Prince,  
Taking thy part, hath rushed aside the law,  
And turned that black word "death" to "banishment."  
This is dear mercy, and thou seest it not.

**ROMEO**

'Tis torture and not mercy. Heaven is here,

- 30 Where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog  
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in heaven and may look on her,  
But Romeo may not. More validity,  
More honorable state, more courtship lives  
35 In carrion flies than Romeo. They may seize  
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand  
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,  
Who even in pure and vestal modesty,  
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.  
40 But Romeo may not. He is banishèd.  
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly.  
They are free men, but I am banishèd.  
And sayst thou yet that exile is not death?  
Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,  
45 No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,

**Modern Text**

for you about the Prince's punishment.

**ROMEO**

Is the Prince's punishment any less awful than  
doomsday?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

He made a gentler decision. You won't die, but  
you'll be banished from the city.

**ROMEO**

Ha, banishment? Be merciful and say "death."  
Exile is much worse than death. Don't say  
"banishment."

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

From now on, you are banished from Verona.  
You should be able to endure this because the  
world is broad and wide.

**ROMEO**

There is no world for me outside the walls of  
Verona, except purgatory, torture, and hell itself.  
So to be banished from Verona is like being  
banished from the world, and being banished  
from the world is death.

Banishment is death by the wrong name. Calling  
death banishment is like cutting off my head with  
a golden ax and smiling while I'm being  
murdered.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Oh, deadly sin! Oh, rude and unthankful boy! You  
committed a crime that is punishable by death,  
but our kind Prince took sympathy on you and  
ignored the law when he substituted banishment  
for death. This is kind mercy, and you don't  
realize it.

**ROMEO**

It's torture, not mercy. Heaven is here because  
Juliet lives here. Every cat and dog and little  
mouse, every unworthy animal that lives here can  
see her, but Romeo can't. Flies are healthier and  
more honorable and better suited for romance  
than Romeo. They can take hold of Juliet's  
wonderful white hand and they can kiss her sweet  
lips. Even while she remains a pure virgin, she  
blushes when her lips touch each other because  
she thinks it's a sin. But Romeo can't kiss her or  
hold her hand because he's been banished. Flies  
can kiss her, but I must flee the city. Flies are like  
free men, but I have been banished. And yet you  
say that exile is not death? Did you have no  
poison, no sharp knife, no weapon you could use  
to kill me quickly, nothing so disgraceful, except  
banishment? Oh Friar, damned souls use the



## Original Text

But “banishèd” to kill me?—“Banishèd”!  
 O Friar, the damnèd use that word in hell.  
 Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,  
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,  
 50 A sin-absolver, and my friend professed,  
 To mangle me with that word “banishèd”?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Thou fond mad man, hear me a little speak.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 3

**ROMEO**

Oh, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I'll give thee armor to keep off that word—  
 55 Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy—  
 To comfort thee though thou art banishèd.

**ROMEO**

Yet “banishèd”? Hang up philosophy!  
 Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,  
 Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom,  
 60 It helps not, it prevails not. Talk no more.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Oh, then I see that madmen have no ears.

**ROMEO**

How should they, when that wise men have no eyes?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

**ROMEO**

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

*Knocking from within*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Arise. One knocks. Good Romeo, hide thyself.

## Modern Text

word banishment to describe hell. They howl  
 about banishment. If you're a member of a divine  
 spiritual order of men who forgive sins, and you  
 say you're my friend, how do you have the heart  
 to mangle me with the word banishment?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

You foolish madman, listen to me for a moment.

**ROMEO**

Oh, you're just going to talk about banishment  
 again.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I'll give you protection from that word. I'll give you  
 the antidote for trouble: philosophy. Philosophy  
 will comfort you even though you've been  
 banished.

**ROMEO**

You're still talking about “banished?” Forget about  
 philosophy! Unless philosophy can create a  
 Juliet, or pick up a town and put it somewhere  
 else, or reverse a prince's punishment, it doesn't  
 do me any good. Don't say anything else.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Oh, so madmen like you are also deaf.

**ROMEO**

How should madmen hear, if wise men can't even  
 see?

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Let me talk to you about your situation.

**ROMEO**

You can't talk about something that you don't  
 feel. If you were as young as I am, if you were in  
 love with Juliet, if you had just married her an  
 hour ago, if then you murdered Tybalt, if you were  
 lovesick like me, and if you were banished, then  
 you might talk about it. You might also tear your  
 hair out of your head and collapse to the ground  
 the way I do right now. (ROMEO falls on the  
 ground) You might kneel down and measure the  
 grave that hasn't yet been dug.

*Knocking from offstage.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Get up. Somebody's knocking. Hide yourself,  
 good Romeo.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 4

**ROMEO**

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

**ROMEO**

I won't hide unless all the mist from my heartsick  
 groans envelopes me like fog and conceals me

## Original Text

## Modern Text

*Knocking*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**  
Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—Romeo,  
75 arise.  
Thou wilt be taken.—Stay awhile.—Stand up.

*Knocking*

Run to my study.—By and by!—God's will,  
What simpleness is this!—I come, I come.

*Knocking*

Who knocks so hard? Whence come you? What's  
your will?  
**NURSE**  
*(from within)* Let me come in, and you shall know my  
80 errand.  
I come from Lady Juliet.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**  
*(opens the door)* Welcome then.  
*Enter NURSE*

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

from people's searching eyes.  
*Knocking.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**  
Listen, they're still knocking!—*(to the person at  
the door)* Who's there?—*(to ROMEO)* Romeo,  
get up. They'll arrest you.—*(to the person at the  
door)* Hold on a moment.—*(to ROMEO)* Get up.

*Knocking*

Run and hide in my study.—Just a minute—For  
the love of God, why are you being so stupid? I'm  
coming. I'm coming.

*Knocking.*

Why are you knocking so hard? Where do you  
come from? What do you want?  
**NURSE**  
*(from offstage)* Let me come in, and I'll tell you  
why I came. I come from Lady Juliet.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**  
*(opening the door)* Welcome, then.  
*The NURSE enters.*

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

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 5

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

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

**ROMEO**  
Nurse!

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

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

**NURSE**  
Oh, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps,

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**  
He's there on the ground. He's been getting  
drunk on his own tears.

**NURSE**  
Oh, he's acting just like Juliet, just like her. Oh  
painful sympathy! What a pitiful problem! She's  
lying on the ground just like him, blubbering and  
weeping, weeping and blubbering. Stand up.  
Stand up. Stand up if you're really a man. For  
Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand up.  
Why should you fall into so deep a moan?

**ROMEO**  
Nurse!

**NURSE**  
Ah sir, ah sir. Well, death is the end for  
everybody.

**ROMEO**  
Were you talking about Juliet? How is she? Does  
she think that I'm a practiced murderer because I  
tainted our newfound joy by killing one of her  
close relatives? Where is she? How is she  
doing? What does my hidden wife say about our  
ruined love?

**NURSE**  
Oh, she doesn't say anything, sir. She just

## Original Text

100 And now falls on her bed, and then starts up,  
And “Tybalt” calls, and then on Romeo cries,  
And then down falls again.

**ROMEO**

As if that name,  
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,  
Did murder her, as that name’s cursed hand  
105 Murdered her kinsman. O, tell me, Friar, tell me,  
In what vile part of this anatomy  
Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack  
The hateful mansion. (*draws his dagger*)

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 6

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Hold thy desperate hand.  
Art thou a man? Thy form cries out thou art.  
110 Thy tears are womanish. Thy wild acts denote  
The unreasonable fury of a beast.  
Unseemly woman in a seeming man,  
And ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!  
Thou hast amazed me. By my holy order,  
115 I thought thy disposition better tempered.  
Hast thou slain Tybalt? Wilt thou slay thyself,  
And slay thy lady that in thy life lives  
By doing damnèd hate upon thyself?  
Why rail’st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?  
120 Since birth and heaven and earth, all three do meet  
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose?  
Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit,  
Which, like a usurer, abound’st in all  
And usest none in that true use indeed  
125 Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.  
Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,  
Digressing from the valor of a man;  
Thy dear love sworn but hollow perjury,  
Killing that love which thou hast vowed to cherish;  
130 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,  
Misshapen in the conduct of them both,  
Like powder in a skill-less soldier’s flask,  
Is set afire by thine own ignorance;  
And thou dismembered with thine own defence.  
135 What, rouse thee, man! Thy Juliet is alive,  
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead—  
There art thou happy. Tybalt would kill thee,  
But thou slew’st Tybalt—there art thou happy.  
The law that threatened death becomes thy friend  
140 And turns it to exile—there art thou happy.  
A pack of blessings light upon thy back,  
Happiness courts thee in her best array,

## Modern Text

weeps and weeps. She falls on her bed and then starts to get up. Then she calls out Tybalt’s name and cries “Romeo,” and then she falls down again.

**ROMEO**

She’s calling out my name as if I were a bullet murdering her, just like I murdered her relative. Tell me, Friar, in what part of my body is my name embedded? Tell me, so I can cut it out of myself. (*he draws his dagger*)

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Hold on, and don’t act out of desperation. Are you a man? You look like a man, but your tears make you look like a woman. Your wild actions resemble the irrational fury of a beast. You’re a shameful woman who looks like a man or else an ugly creature who’s half-man, half-beast. You have amazed me. I swear by my holy order, I thought you were smarter and more rational than this. Have you killed Tybalt? Will you kill yourself? And would you also kill your wife, who shares your life, by committing the sin of killing yourself? Why do you complain about your birth, the heavens, and the earth? Life is the union of soul in body through the miracle of birth, but you would throw all that away. You bring shame to your body, your love, and your mind. You have so much natural talent, but like someone who hoards money, you use none of your talent for the right purpose—not your body, not your love, not your mind. Your body is just a wax figure, without the honor of a man. The love that you promised was a hollow lie. You’re killing the love that you vowed to cherish. Your mind, which aids both your body and your love, has mishandled both of them. You’re like a stupid soldier whose gunpowder explodes because he’s careless. The things you were supposed to use to defend yourself end up killing you. Get up, man! Your Juliet is alive. It was for her that you were almost killed earlier. Be happy that she’s alive. Tybalt wanted to kill you, but you killed Tybalt. Be happy that you’re alive. The law that threatened your life was softened into exile. Be happy about that. Your life is full of blessings. You have the best sorts of happiness to enjoy.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 7

But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,

But like a misbehaved, sullen girl, you’re whining

**Original Text**

Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love.  
 145 Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.  
 Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed.  
 Ascend her chamber, hence, and comfort her.  
 But look thou stay not till the watch be set,  
 For then thou canst not pass to Mantua,  
 150 Where thou shalt live, till we can find a time  
 To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,  
 Beg pardon of the Prince, and call thee back  
 With twenty hundred thousand times more joy  
 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—  
 155 Go before, Nurse. Commend me to thy lady,  
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed,  
 Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto.  
 Romeo is coming.

**NURSE**

O Lord, I could have stayed here all the night  
 160 To hear good counsel. Oh, what learning is!  
 My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

**ROMEO**

Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

**NURSE**

Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir.  
*(gives ROMEO JULIET's ring)*  
 165 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

*Exit NURSE*

**ROMEO**

How well my comfort is revived by this!

**Modern Text**

about your bad luck and your love. Listen, listen, people who act like that die miserable. Go be with your love, as it was decided at your wedding. Climb up to her bedroom and comfort her. But get out of there before the night watchmen take their positions. Then you will escape to the city of Mantua, where you'll live until we can make your marriage public and make peace between your families. We'll ask the Prince to pardon you. Then we'll welcome you back with twenty thousand times more joy than you'll have when you leave this town crying. Go ahead, Nurse. Give my regards to your lady, and tell her to hurry everybody in the house to bed. I'm sure they're all so sad that they'll be ready to sleep. Romeo is coming.

**NURSE**

O Lord, I could stay here all night listening to such good advice. Educated men are so impressive! *(speaking to ROMEO)* My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

**ROMEO**

Do so, and tell my sweet to be ready to scold me.

**NURSE**

Here, sir, this is a ring she asked me to give you. Hurry up, it's getting late. *(she gives ROMEO JULIET's ring)*

*The NURSE exits.*

**ROMEO**

This makes me feel so much better!

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 8****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Go hence. Good night. And here stands all your state:  
 Either be gone before the watch be set,  
 170 Or by the break of day disguised from hence.  
 Sojourn in Mantua. I'll find out your man,  
 And he shall signify from time to time  
 Every good hap to you that chances here.  
 Give me thy hand. 'Tis late. Farewell, good night.

**ROMEO**

But that a joy past joy calls out on me,  
 175 It were a grief so brief to part with thee.  
 Farewell.

*Exeunt*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Now get out of here. Good night. Everything depends on this: either be out of here before the night watchmen take their positions, or leave in disguise after daybreak. Take a little vacation in Mantua. I'll find your servant, and he'll update you now and then on your case as it stands here. Give me your hand. It's late. Farewell. Good night.

**ROMEO**

I'm off to experience the greatest joy of all, but still it's sad to leave you in such a rush. Farewell.

*They exit.*

**Act 3, Scene 4**

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS*

**CAPULET**

Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, and PARIS*

**CAPULET**

Things have turned out so unluckily, sir, that we

**Original Text**

That we have had no time to move our daughter.  
Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,  
And so did I. Well, we were born to die.

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

**PARIS**

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

**LADY CAPULET**

- 10 I will, and know her mind early tomorrow.  
Tonight she is mew'd up to her heaviness.

**CAPULET**

Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender  
Of my child's love. I think she will be ruled  
In all respects by me. Nay, more, I doubt it not.—

- 15 Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed.  
Acquaint her here of my son Paris' love,  
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—  
But, soft! What day is this?

**PARIS**

Monday, my lord.

**CAPULET**

- 20 Monday! Ha, ha. Well, Wednesday is too soon,  
O' Thursday let it be.—O' Thursday, tell her,  
She shall be married to this noble earl.—  
Will you be ready? Do you like this haste?  
We'll keep no great ado, a friend or two.  
25 For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,  
It may be thought we held him carelessly,  
Being our kinsman, if we revel much.  
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,  
And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

**Modern Text**

haven't had time to convince our daughter to  
marry you. Listen, she loved her cousin Tybalt  
dearly, and so did I. Well, we were all born to die.  
It's very late, she won't be coming downstairs  
tonight. Believe me, if you weren't here visiting  
me, I myself would have gone to bed an hour  
ago.

**PARIS**

These times of pain are bad times for romance.  
Madam, good night. Give my regards to your  
daughter.

**LADY CAPULET**

I will. And I'll find out what she thinks about  
marriage early tomorrow. Tonight she is shut up  
in her room, alone with her sadness.

**CAPULET**

Sir Paris, I'll make a desperate argument for my  
child's love. I think she'll do whatever I say. No, I  
think she'll do all that and more. I have no doubt  
about it. Wife, visit her in her room before you go  
to bed. Tell her about my son Paris's love for her.  
And tell her, listen to me, on Wednesday—Wait—  
What day is today?

**PARIS**

Monday, my lord.

**CAPULET**

Monday! Ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon.  
Let it be on Thursday. On Thursday, tell her,  
she'll be married to this noble earl. Will you be  
ready? Do you think it's a good idea to rush? We  
shouldn't have too big a celebration—we can  
invite a friend or two. Listen, because Tybalt was  
just killed, people might think that we don't care  
about his memory as our relative if we have too  
grand a party. Therefore we'll have about half a  
dozen friends to the wedding, and that's it. What  
do you think about Thursday?

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2****PARIS**

- 30 My lord, I would that Thursday were tomorrow.

**CAPULET**

Well get you gone. O' Thursday be it, then.—  
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed.  
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day.—  
Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho!

- 35 Afore me! It is so very late,  
That we may call it early by and by.—  
Good night.

**PARIS**

My lord, I wish Thursday were tomorrow.

**CAPULET**

Well go on home. Thursday it is, then. (to LADY  
CAPULET) Visit Juliet before you go to bed. Get  
her ready, my wife, for this wedding  
day. (to PARIS) Farewell, my lord. Now I'm off to  
bed. Oh my! It's so late that we might as well call  
it early. Good night.

*Exeunt*

*They all exit.*

**Act 3, Scene 5**

## Original Text

Enter **ROMEO** and **JULIET** aloft

**JULIET**

Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.  
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.  
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree.  
5 Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

**ROMEO**

It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.  
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
10 Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.  
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

**JULIET**

Yon light is not daylight, I know it, I.  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales  
To be to thee this night a torchbearer,  
15 And light thee on thy way to Mantua.  
Therefore stay yet. Thou need'st not to be gone.

**ROMEO**

Let me be ta'en. Let me be put to death.  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye.  
20 'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow.  
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat  
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.  
I have more care to stay than will to go.  
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—  
25 How is 't, my soul? Let's talk. It is not day.

## Modern Text

**ROMEO** and **JULIET** enter above the stage.

**JULIET**

Are you going? It's still a long time until daybreak.  
Don't be afraid. That sound you heard was  
the [nightingale](#), not the lark. Every night the  
nightingale chirps on that pomegranate-tree.  
Believe me, my love, it was the nightingale.

**ROMEO**

It was the lark, the bird that sings at dawn, not the  
nightingale. Look, my love, what are those  
streaks of light in the clouds parting in the east?  
Night is over, and day is coming. If I want to live, I  
must go. If I stay, I'll die.

**JULIET**

That light is not daylight, I know it. It's some  
meteor coming out of the sun to light your way to  
Mantua. So stay for a while. You don't have to go  
yet.

**ROMEO**

Let me be captured. Let me be put to death. I am  
content, if that's the way you want it. I'll say the  
light over there isn't morning. I'll say it's the  
reflection of the moon. I'll say that sound isn't the  
lark ringing in the sky. I want to stay more than I  
want to go. Come, death, and welcome! Juliet  
wants it this way. How are you, my love? Let's  
talk. It's not daylight.

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 2

**JULIET**

It is, it is. Hie hence! Be gone, away!  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say the lark makes sweet division.  
30 This doth not so, for she divideth us.  
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes.  
Oh, now I would they had changed voices too,  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,  
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.  
35 O, now be gone. More light and light it grows.

**ROMEO**

More light and light, more dark and dark our woes!

Enter **NURSE**

**NURSE**

Madam.

**JULIET**

Nurse?

**NURSE**

Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.

**JULIET**

It is, it is. Get out of here, be gone, go away! It's  
the lark that sings so out of tune, making such  
harsh noise. Some say the lark makes a sweet  
division between day and night. It's not true  
because she separates us. [Some say the lark  
traded its eyes with the toad](#). Oh, now I wish they  
had traded voices too! Because the lark's voice  
tears us out of each other's arms, and now there  
will be men hunting for you. Oh, go away now. I  
see more and more light.

**ROMEO**

More and more light. More and more pain for us.

The **NURSE** enters.

**NURSE**

Madam.

**JULIET**

Nurse?

**NURSE**

Your mother is coming to your bedroom. Day has

## Original Text

40 The day is broke. Be wary, look about.

*Exit NURSE*

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

*Kiss. ROMEO goes down*

## Modern Text

broken. Be careful. Watch out.

*The NURSE exits.*

**JULIET**

Then the window lets day in, and life goes out the window.

**ROMEO**

Farewell, farewell! Give me one kiss, and I'll go down.

*They kiss. ROMEO drops the ladder and goes down.*

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 3

**JULIET**

Art thou gone so, love, lord? Ay, husband, friend,  
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,

45 For in a minute there are many days.

Oh, by this count I shall be much in years  
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

**ROMEO**

Farewell!

I will omit no opportunity

That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

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

**JULIET**

O God, I have an ill-divining soul.  
Methinks I see thee now, thou art so low

55 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 ROMEO*

**JULIET**

O fortune, fortune! All men call thee fickle.

60 If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him

That is renowned for faith? Be fickle, fortune,  
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,  
But send him back.

**LADY CAPULET**

*(from within)* Ho, daughter, are you up?

**JULIET**

Are you gone like that, my love, my lord? Yes, my  
husband, my friend! I must hear from you every

day in the hour. In a minute there are many days.

Oh, by this count I'll be many years older before I  
see my Romeo again.

**ROMEO**

Farewell! I won't miss any chance to send my  
love to you.

**JULIET**

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

**ROMEO**

I have no doubts. All these troubles will give us  
stories to tell each other later in life.

**JULIET**

Oh God, I have a soul that predicts evil things!  
Now that you are down there, you look like  
someone dead in the bottom of a tomb. Either my  
eyesight is failing me, or you look pale.

**ROMEO**

And trust me, love, you look pale to me too.

Sadness takes away our color. Goodbye,

Goodbye!

*ROMEO exits.*

**JULIET**

Oh luck, luck. Everyone says you can't make up  
your mind. If you change your mind so much,  
what are you going to do to Romeo, who's so  
faithful? Change your mind, luck. I hope maybe  
then you'll send him back home soon.

**LADY CAPULET**

*(offstage)* Hey, daughter! Are you awake?

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 4

**JULIET**

65 Who is 't that calls? Is it my lady mother?  
Is she not down so late or up so early?

**JULIET**

Who's that calling? Is it my mother? Isn't she up  
very late? Or is she up very early? What strange

## Original Text

What unaccustomed cause procures her hither?

*Enter LADY CAPULET*

**LADY CAPULET**

Why, how now, Juliet?

**JULIET**

Madam, I am not well.

**LADY CAPULET**

Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

70 What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?

An if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live.

Therefore, have done. Some grief shows much of love,

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

**JULIET**

Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

**LADY CAPULET**

75 So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend

Which you weep for.

**JULIET**

Feeling so the loss,

Cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death,

As that the villain lives which slaughtered him.

**JULIET**

80 What villain, madam?

**LADY CAPULET**

That same villain, Romeo.

## Modern Text

reason could she have for coming here?

*LADY CAPULET enters.*

**LADY CAPULET**

What's going on, Juliet?

**JULIET**

Madam, I am not well.

**LADY CAPULET**

Will you cry about your cousin's death forever?

Are you trying to wash him out of his grave with

tears? If you could, you couldn't bring him back to

life. So stop crying. A little bit of grief shows a lot

of love. But too much grief makes you look stupid.

**JULIET**

Let me keep weeping for such a great loss.

**LADY CAPULET**

You will feel the loss, but the man you weep for

will feel nothing.

**JULIET**

Feeling the loss like this, I can't help but weep for

him forever.

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, girl, you're weeping not for his death as

much as for the fact that the villain who killed him

**JULIET**

What villain, madam?

**LADY CAPULET**

That villain, Romeo.

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 5

**JULIET**

*(aside)* Villain and he be many miles asunder.

*(to LADY CAPULET)* God pardon him! I do, with all my heart,

And yet no man like he doth grieve my heart.

**LADY CAPULET**

That is because the traitor murderer lives.

**JULIET**

85 Ay, madam, from the reach of these my hands.

Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!

**LADY CAPULET**

We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not.

Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,

Where that same banished runagate doth live,

90 Shall give him such an unaccustomed dram

That he shall soon keep Tybalt company.

And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

**JULIET**

**JULIET**

*(speaking so that LADY CAPULET can't*

*hear)* He's far from being a villain. *(to LADY*

*CAPULET)* May God pardon him! I do, with all

my heart. And yet no man could make my heart

grieve like he does.

**LADY CAPULET**

That's because the murderer is alive.

**JULIET**

Yes, madam, he lies beyond my reach. I wish

that no one could avenge my cousin's death

except me!

**LADY CAPULET**

We'll have revenge for it. Don't worry about that.

Stop crying. I'll send a man to Mantua, where

that exiled rogue is living. Our man will poison

Romeo's drink, and Romeo will join Tybalt in

death. And then, I hope, you'll be satisfied.

**JULIET**



**Original Text**

Indeed, I never shall be satisfied  
 With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—  
 95 Is my poor heart for a kinsman vexed.  
 Madam, if you could find out but a man  
 To bear a poison, I would temper it,  
 That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,  
 Soon sleep in quiet. Oh, how my heart abhors  
 100 To hear him named, and cannot come to him.  
 To wreak the love I bore my cousin  
 Upon his body that slaughtered him!

**LADY CAPULET**

Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.  
 But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

**JULIET**

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

**Act 3, Scene 5, Page 6****LADY CAPULET**

Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child.  
 One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,  
 Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy  
 110 That thou expect'st not, nor I looked not for.

**JULIET**

Madam, in happy time, what day is that?

**LADY CAPULET**

Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn,  
 The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,  
 The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,  
 115 Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

**JULIET**

Now, by Saint Peter's Church and Peter too,  
 He shall not make me there a joyful bride.  
 I wonder at this haste, that I must wed  
 Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.  
 120 I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,  
 I will not marry yet. And when I do, I swear  
 It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,  
 Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

**LADY CAPULET**

Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself,  
 125 And see how he will take it at your hands.

*Enter CAPULET and NURSE*

**CAPULET**

When the sun sets the air doth drizzle dew,  
 But for the sunset of my brother's son  
 It rains downright.  
 How now? A conduit, girl? What, still in tears,  
 130 Evermore showering? In one little body  
 Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind,  
 For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,  
 Do ebb and flow with tears. The bark thy body is,

**Modern Text**

I'll never be satisfied with Romeo until I see  
 him . . . dead—dead is how my poor heart feels  
 when I think about my poor cousin. Madam, if  
 you can find a man to deliver the poison, I'll mix it  
 myself so that Romeo will sleep quietly soon  
 after he drinks it. Oh, how I hate to hear people  
 say his name and not be able to go after him. I  
 want to take the love I had for my cousin and  
 take it out on the body of the man who killed him.

**LADY CAPULET**

Find out the way, and I'll find the right man. But  
 now I have joyful news for you, girl.

**JULIET**

And it's good to have joy in such a joyless time.  
 What's the news? Please tell me.

**LADY CAPULET**

Well, well, you have a careful father, child. He  
 has arranged a sudden day of joy to end your  
 sadness. A day that you did not expect and that I  
 did not seek out.

**JULIET**

Madam, tell me quickly, what day is that?

**LADY CAPULET**

Indeed, my child, at Saint Peter's Church early  
 Thursday morning, the gallant, young, and noble  
 gentleman Count Paris will happily make you a  
 joyful bride.

**JULIET**

Now, I swear by Saint Peter's Church and Peter  
 too, he will not make me a joyful bride there. This  
 is a strange rush. How can I marry him, this  
 husband, before he comes to court me? Please,  
 tell my father, madam, I won't marry yet. And,  
 when I do marry, I swear, it will be Romeo, whom  
 you know I hate, rather than Paris. That's really  
 news!

**LADY CAPULET**

Here comes your father. Tell him so yourself,  
 and see how he takes the news.

*CAPULET and the NURSE enter.*

**CAPULET**

When the sun sets, the air drizzles dew. But at  
 the death of my brother's son, it rains a  
 downpour. What are you, girl? Some kind of  
 fountain? Why are you still crying? Will you cry  
 forever? In one little body you seem like a ship,  
 the sea, and the winds. Your eyes, which I call  
 the sea, flow with tears. The ship is your body  
 which is sailing on the salt flood of your tears.

**Original Text**

Sailing in this salt flood. The winds thy sighs,  
 135 Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them,  
 Without a sudden calm will overset  
 Thy tempest-tossèd body.—How now, wife?  
 Have you delivered to her our decree?

**Act 3, Scene 5, Page 7****LADY CAPULET**

Ay, sir, but she will none, she gives you thanks.  
 140 I would the fool were married to her grave!

**CAPULET**

Soft, take me with you, take me with you, wife.  
 How, will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?  
 Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blessed,  
 Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought  
 145 So worthy a gentleman to be her bride?

**JULIET**

Not proud you have, but thankful that you have.  
 Proud can I never be of what I hate,  
 But thankful even for hate that is meant love.

**CAPULET**

How, how, how, how? Chopped logic! What is this?  
 150 “Proud,” and “I thank you,” and “I thank you not,”  
 And yet “not proud”? Mistress minion you,  
 Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,  
 But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next  
 To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,  
 155 Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.  
 Out, you green sickness, carrion! Out, you baggage!  
 You tallow face!

**LADY CAPULET**

Fie, fie! What, are you mad?

**JULIET**

Good Father, I beseech you on my knees,  
 Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

**Act 3, Scene 5, Page 8****CAPULET**

160 Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch!  
 I tell thee what: get thee to church o' Thursday,  
 Or never after look me in the face.  
 Speak not. Reply not. Do not answer me.  
 My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us blest  
 165 That God had lent us but this only child,  
 But now I see this one is one too much  
 And that we have a curse in having her.  
 Out on her, hilding!

**Modern Text**

The winds are your sighs. Your sighs and your  
 tears are raging. Unless you calm down, tears  
 and sighs will overwhelm your body and sink  
 your ship. So where do things stand, wife? Have  
 you told her our decision?

**LADY CAPULET**

Yes, sir, I told her. But she won't agree. She says  
 thank you but refuses. I wish the fool were dead  
 and married to her grave!

**CAPULET**

Wait! Hold on, wife. I don't understand. How can  
 this be? She refuses? Isn't she grateful? Isn't  
 she proud of such a match? Doesn't she realize  
 what a blessing this is? Doesn't she realize how  
 unworthy she is of the gentleman we have found  
 to be her bridegroom?

**JULIET**

I am not proud of what you have found for me.  
 But I am thankful that you have found it. I can  
 never be proud of what I hate. But I can be  
 thankful for something I hate, if it was meant with  
 love.

**CAPULET**

What is this? What is this fuzzy logic? What is  
 this? I hear you say “proud” and “I thank you,”  
 and then “no thank you” and “not proud,” you  
 spoiled little girl. You're not really giving me any  
 thanks or showing me any pride. But get yourself  
 ready for Thursday. You're going to Saint Peter's  
 Church to marry Paris. And if you don't go on  
 your own, I'll drag you there. You disgust me,  
 you little bug! You worthless girl! You pale face!

**LADY CAPULET**

Shame on you! What, are you crazy?

**JULIET**

Good father, I'm begging you on my knees, be  
 patient and listen to me say just one thing.

**CAPULET**

Forget about you, you worthless girl! You  
 disobedient wretch! I'll tell you what. Go to  
 church on Thursday or never look me in the face  
 again. Don't say anything. Don't reply. Don't talk  
 back to me.  
 (JULIET rises)  
 I feel like slapping you. Wife, we never thought  
 ourselves blessed that God only gave us this one  
 child. But now I see that this one is one too  
 many. We were cursed when we had her. She

## Original Text

**NURSE**

God in heaven bless her!  
You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

**CAPULET**

170 And why, my Lady Wisdom? Hold your tongue,  
Good prudence. Smatter with your gossips, go.

**NURSE**

I speak no treason.

**CAPULET**

Oh, God 'i' good e'en.

**NURSE**

May not one speak?

**CAPULET**

Peace, you mumbling fool!  
Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,  
175 For here we need it not.

**LADY CAPULET**

You are too hot.

**CAPULET**

God's bread! It makes me mad.  
Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,  
Alone, in company, still my care hath been  
To have her matched. And having now provided  
180 A gentleman of noble parentage,  
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly trained,  
Stuffed, as they say, with honorable parts,  
Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man—  
And then to have a wretched puling fool,  
185 A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,  
To answer "I'll not wed," "I cannot love,"  
"I am too young," "I pray you, pardon me."—  
But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you.  
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me.  
190 Look to 't, think on 't, I do not use to jest.  
Thursday is near. Lay hand on heart, advise.  
An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend.  
An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,  
For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,  
195 Nor what is mine shall never do thee good.  
Trust to 't, bethink you. I'll not be forsworn.

## Modern Text

disgusts me, the little hussy!

**NURSE**

God in heaven bless her! My lord, you're wrong  
to berate her like that.

**CAPULET**

And why, wise lady? You shut up, old woman.  
Go blabber with your gossiping friends.

**NURSE**

I've said nothing wrong.

**CAPULET**

Oh, for God's sake.

**NURSE**

Can't I say something?

**CAPULET**

Be quiet, you mumbling fool! Say your serious  
things at lunch with your gossiping friends. We  
don't need to hear it.

**LADY CAPULET**

You're getting too angry.

**CAPULET**

Goddammit! It makes me mad. Day and night,  
hour after hour, all the time, at work, at play,  
alone, in company, my top priority has always  
been to find her a husband. Now I've provided a  
husband from a noble family, who is good-  
looking, young, well-educated. He's full of good  
qualities.  
He's the man of any girl's dreams. But this  
wretched, whimpering fool, like a whining puppet,  
she looks at this good fortune and answers, "I  
won't get married. I can't fall in love. I'm too  
young. Please, excuse me." Well, if you won't get  
married, I'll excuse you. Eat wherever you want,  
but you can no longer live under my roof.  
Consider that. Think about it. I'm not in the habit  
of joking. Thursday is coming. Put your hand on  
your heart and listen to my advice. If you act like  
my daughter, I'll marry you to my friend. If you  
don't act like my daughter, you can beg, starve,  
and die in the streets. I swear on my soul, I will  
never take you back or do anything for you.  
Believe me. Think about it. I won't break this  
promise.

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 9

*Exit CAPULET*

*CAPULET exits.*

**JULIET**

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds  
That sees into the bottom of my grief?—  
O sweet my mother, cast me not away!  
200 Delay this marriage for a month, a week.  
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed

**JULIET**

Is there no pity in the sky that can see my  
sadness? Oh, my sweet mother, don't throw me  
out! Delay this marriage for a month, or a week.  
Or, if you don't delay, make my wedding bed in  
the tomb where Tybalt lies.

**Original Text**

In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

**LADY CAPULET**

Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.  
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

*Exit LADY CAPULET*

**JULIET**

- 205 O God!—O Nurse, how shall this be prevented?  
My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven.  
How shall that faith return again to earth,  
Unless that husband send it me from heaven  
By leaving earth? Comfort me. Counsel me.—  
210 Alack, alack, that heaven should practice stratagems  
Upon so soft a subject as myself.—  
What sayst thou? Hast thou not a word of joy?  
Some comfort, Nurse.

**Act 3, Scene 5, Page 10****NURSE**

- Faith, here it is.  
Romeo is banishèd, and all the world to nothing  
215 That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you.  
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.  
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,  
I think it best you married with the county.  
Oh, he's a lovely gentleman.  
220 Romeo's a dishclout to him. An eagle, madam,  
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye  
As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,  
I think you are happy in this second match,  
For it excels your first. Or if it did not,  
225 Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were,  
As living here and you no use of him.

**JULIET**

Speakest thou from thy heart?

**NURSE**

And from my soul too, else beshrew them both.

**JULIET**

Amen!

**NURSE**

- 230 What?

**JULIET**

Well, thou hast comforted me marvelous much.  
Go in, and tell my lady I am gone,  
Having displeas'd my father, to Lawrence's cell  
To make confession and to be absolved.

**NURSE**

- 235 Marry, I will, and this is wisely done.

*Exit NURSE*

**Modern Text****LADY CAPULET**

Don't talk to me, because I won't say a word. Do  
as you please, because I'm done worrying about  
you.

*LADY CAPULET exits.*

**JULIET**

Oh God!—Oh Nurse, how can this be stopped?  
My husband is alive on earth, my vows of  
marriage are in heaven. How can I bring those  
promises back down to earth, unless my  
husband sends them back down to me by dying  
and going to heaven? Give me comfort. Give me  
advice. Oh no! Oh no! Why does heaven play  
tricks on someone as weak as me? What do you  
say? Don't you have one word of joy? Give me  
some comfort, Nurse.

**NURSE**

This is what I have to say: Romeo has been  
banished. And it's a sure thing that he will never  
come back to challenge you. If he does come  
back, he'll have to sneak back undercover. Then,  
since things are the way they are, I think the best  
thing to do is to marry the count. Oh, he's a  
lovely gentleman! Romeo's a dishcloth compared  
to him. Madam, an eagle does not have eyes as  
green, as quick, and as fair as the eyes of Paris.  
Curse my very heart, but I think you should be  
happy in this second marriage, because it's  
better than your first. Even if it's not better, your  
first marriage is over. Or if Romeo is as good as  
Paris, Romeo doesn't live here, so you don't get  
to enjoy him.

**JULIET**

Are you speaking from your heart?

**NURSE**

I speak from my heart and from my soul too. If  
not, curse them both.

**JULIET**

Amen!

**NURSE**

What?

**JULIET**

Well, you have given me great comfort. Go inside  
and tell my mother that I'm gone. I made my  
father angry, so I went to Friar Lawrence's cell to  
confess and be forgiven.

**NURSE**

Alright, I will. This is a good idea.

*The NURSE exits.*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 11

**JULIET**

Ancient damnation! O most wicked fiend!  
 Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,  
 Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue  
 Which she hath praised him with above compare  
 240 So many thousand times? Go, counselor.  
 Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.  
 I'll to the friar to know his remedy.  
 If all else fail, myself have power to die.

*Exit***JULIET**

That damned old lady! Oh, that most wicked  
 fiend! Is it a worse sin for her to want me to break  
 my vows or for her to say bad things about my  
 husband after she praised him so many times  
 before? Away with you and your advice, Nurse.  
 From now on, I will never tell you what I feel in  
 my heart. I'm going to the Friar to find out his  
 solution. If everything else fails, at least I have  
 the power to take my own life.

*JULIET exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 1

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS**FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter.***FRIAR LAWRENCE**

On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

**PARIS**

My father Capulet will have it so,  
 And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

You say you do not know the lady's mind.  
 5 Uneven is the course. I like it not.

**PARIS**

Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,  
 And therefore have I little talked of love,  
 For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.  
 Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous  
 10 That she do give her sorrow so much sway,  
 And in his wisdom hastes our marriage  
 To stop the inundation of her tears—  
 Which, too much minded by herself alone,  
 May be put from her by society.  
 15 Now do you know the reason of this haste.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

*(aside)* I would I knew not why it should be slowed.—  
 Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

*Enter JULIET***PARIS**

Happily met, my lady and my wife.

**JULIET**

That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

On Thursday, sir? That's very soon.

**PARIS**

That's how my future father-in-law Capulet wants  
 it, and I'm not dragging my feet.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

You say you don't know what the girl thinks.  
 That's a rocky road to be riding. I don't like it.

**PARIS**

She's grieving too much over the death of Tybalt.  
 So I haven't had the chance to talk to her about  
 love. Romantic love doesn't happen when people  
 are in mourning. Now, sir, her father thinks it's  
 dangerous that she allows herself to become so  
 sad. He's being smart by rushing our marriage to  
 stop her from crying. She cries too much by  
 herself. If she had someone to be with her, she  
 would stop crying. Now you know the reason for  
 the rush.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

*(to himself)* I wish I didn't know the reason why  
 the marriage should be slowed down.  
 Look, sir, here comes the lady walking toward my  
 cell.

*JULIET enters.***PARIS**

I'm happy to meet you, my lady and my wife.

**JULIET**

That might be the case sir, *after* I'm married.

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 2

**PARIS**

20 That "may be" must be, love, on Thursday next.

**JULIET**

What must be shall be.

**PARIS**

That "may be" must be, love, on Thursday.

**JULIET**

What must be will be.

## Original Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That's a certain text.

**PARIS**

Come you to make confession to this Father?

**JULIET**

To answer that, I should confess to you.

**PARIS**

25 Do not deny to him that you love me.

**JULIET**

I will confess to you that I love him.

**PARIS**

So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

**JULIET**

If I do so, it will be of more price  
Being spoke behind your back than to your face.

**PARIS**

30 Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

**JULIET**

The tears have got small victory by that,  
For it was bad enough before their spite.

**PARIS**

Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.

**JULIET**

That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,  
35 And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

**PARIS**

Thy face is mine, and thou hast slandered it.

**JULIET**

It may be so, for it is not mine own.—  
Are you at leisure, holy Father, now,  
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

## Modern Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That is a certain truth.

**PARIS**

Have you come to make confession to this  
father?

**JULIET**

If I answered that question, I'd be making  
confession to you.

**PARIS**

Don't deny to him that you love me.

**JULIET**

I'll confess to you that I love him.

**PARIS**

You will also confess, I'm sure, that you love me.

**JULIET**

If I do so, it will mean more if I say it behind your  
back than if I say it to your face.

**PARIS**

You poor soul, your face has suffered many  
tears.

**JULIET**

The tears haven't done much because my face  
looked bad enough before I started to cry.

**PARIS**

You're treating your face even worse by saying  
that.

**JULIET**

What I say isn't slander, sir. It's the truth. And  
what I said, I said to my face.

**PARIS**

Your face is mine, and you have slandered it.

**JULIET**

That may be the case, because my face doesn't  
belong to me.—Do you have time for me now,  
Father, or should I come to you at evening mass?

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 3

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

40 My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now.—  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone.

**PARIS**

God shield I should disturb devotion!—  
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye.  
(*kisses her*) Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss.

*Exit PARIS*

**JULIET**

45 O, shut the door! And when thou hast done so,  
Come weep with me, past hope, past cure, past help.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I have time for you now, my sad  
daughter. (*to PARIS*) My lord, we must ask you to  
leave us alone.

**PARIS**

God forbid that I should prevent sacred devotion!  
Juliet, I will wake you early on Thursday. (*kissing  
her*) Until then, good-bye, and keep this holy kiss.

*PARIS exits.*

**JULIET**

Oh, shut the door, and after you shut it, come  
over here and weep with me. This mess is  
beyond hope, beyond cure, beyond help!

**Original Text****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

O Juliet, I already know thy grief.  
It strains me past the compass of my wits.  
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,  
50 On Thursday next be married to this county.

**JULIET**

Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,  
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.  
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,  
Do thou but call my resolution wise,  
55 And with this knife I'll help it presently.  
*(shows him a knife)*  
God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands.  
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo sealed,  
Shall be the label to another deed,  
60 Or my true heart with treacherous revolt  
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.  
Therefore out of thy long-experienced time,  
Give me some present counsel, or, behold,  
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife  
65 Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that  
Which the commission of thy years and art  
Could to no issue of true honor bring.  
Be not so long to speak. I long to die  
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

70 Hold, daughter. I do spy a kind of hope,  
Which craves as desperate an execution  
As that is desperate which we would prevent.  
If, rather than to marry County Paris,  
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,  
75 Then is it likely thou wilt undertake  
A thing like death to chide away this shame,  
That copes with death himself to 'scape from it.  
An if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

**JULIET**

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,  
80 From off the battlements of yonder tower;  
Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk  
Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;  
Or shut me nightly in a charnel house,  
O'ercovered quite with dead men's rattling bones,  
85 With reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls;  
Or bid me go into a new-made grave  
And hide me with a dead man in his shroud—  
Things that, to hear them told, have made me  
tremble—  
90 And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
To live an unstained wife to my sweet love.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Hold, then. Go home, be merry. Give consent  
To marry Paris. Wednesday is tomorrow.

**Modern Text****FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Oh, Juliet, I already know about your sad situation. It's a problem too hard for me to solve. I hear that you must marry this count on Thursday, and that nothing can delay it.

**JULIET**

Don't tell me that you've heard about this marriage, Friar, unless you can tell me how to prevent it. If you who are so wise can't help, please be kind enough to call my solution wise. *(she shows him a knife)* And I'll solve the problem now with this knife. God joined my heart to Romeo's. You joined our hands. And before I—who was married to Romeo by you—am married to another man, I'll kill myself. You are wise and you have so much experience. Give me some advice about the current situation. Or watch. Caught between these two difficulties, I'll act like a judge with my bloody knife. I will truly and honorably resolve the situation that you can't fix, despite your experience and education. Don't wait long to speak. I want to die if what you say isn't another solution.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Hold on, daughter, I see some hope. But we must act boldly because the situation is so desperate. If you've made up your mind to kill yourself instead of marrying Count Paris, then you'll probably be willing to try something like death to solve this shameful problem. You can wrestle with death to escape from shame. And if you dare to do it, I'll give you the solution.

**JULIET**

Oh, you can tell me to jump off the battle posts of any tower, or to walk down the crime-ridden streets of a slum. Or tell me to sit in a field full of poisonous snakes. Chain me up with wild bears. Hide me every night in a morgue full of dead bodies with wet, smelly flesh and skulls without jawbones. Or tell me to climb down into a freshly dug grave, and hide me with a dead man in his tomb. All those ideas make me tremble when I hear them named. But I will do them without fear or dread in order to be a pure wife to my sweet love.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Hold on, then. Go home, be cheerful, and tell them you agree to marry Paris. Tomorrow is

## Original Text

Tomorrow night look that thou lie alone.  
 Let not the Nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.  
 95 *(shows her a vial)*  
 Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
 And this distillèd liquor drink thou off,  
 When presently through all thy veins shall run  
 A cold and drowsy humor, for no pulse  
 100 Shall keep his native progress, but surcease.  
 No warmth, no breath shall testify thou livest.  
 The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade  
 To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall  
 Like death when he shuts up the day of life.  
 105 Each part, deprived of supple government,  
 Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death.  
 And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death  
 Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,  
 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.  
 110 Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes  
 To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.  
 Then, as the manner of our country is,  
 In thy best robes uncovered on the bier  
 Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault  
 115 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.  
 In the meantime, against thou shalt awake,  
 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,  
 And hither shall he come, and he and I  
 Will watch thy waking, and that very night  
 120 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.  
 And this shall free thee from this present shame,  
 If no inconstant toy, nor womanish fear,  
 Abate thy valor in the acting it.

## Modern Text

Wednesday. Tomorrow night make sure that you are alone. Don't let the Nurse stay with you in your bedroom. *(showing her a vial)* When you're in bed, take this vial, mix its contents with liquor, and drink. Then a cold, sleep-inducing drug will run through your veins, and your pulse will stop. Your flesh will be cold, and you'll stop breathing. The red in your lips and your cheeks will turn pale, and your eyes will shut. It will seem like you're dead. You won't be able to move, and your body will be stiff like a corpse. You'll remain in this deathlike state for forty-two hours, and then you'll wake up as if from a pleasant sleep. Now, when the bridegroom comes to get you out of bed on Thursday morning, you'll seem dead. Then, as tradition demands, you'll be dressed up in your best clothes, put in an open coffin, and carried to the Capulet family tomb. Meanwhile, I'll send Romeo word of our plan. He'll come here, and we'll keep a watch for when you wake up. That night, Romeo will take you away to Mantua. This plan will free you from the shameful situation that troubles you now as long as you don't change your mind, or become scared like a silly woman and ruin your brave effort.

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 5

**JULIET**

Give me, give me! O, tell not me of fear!

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

125 *(gives her a vial)*  
 Hold. Get you gone. Be strong and prosperous  
 In this resolve. I'll send a friar with speed  
 To Mantua with my letters to thy lord.

**JULIET**

Love give me strength, and strength shall help  
 130 afford.  
 Farewell, dear Father.

*Exeunt, separately***JULIET**

Give me the vial. Give it to me! Don't talk to me about fear.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

*(giving her the vial)* Now go along on your way.  
 Be strong and successful in this decision. I'll  
 send a friar quickly to Mantua with my letter for  
 Romeo.

**JULIET**

Love will give me strength, and strength will help  
 me accomplish this plan. Goodbye, dear Father.

*They exit separately.*

## Act 4, Scene 2

*Enter CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, NURSE, and  
 two or three SERVINGMEN*

**CAPULET***(gives paper to FIRST SERVINGMAN)* So many

*CAPULET enters with LADY CAPULET,  
 the NURSE, and two or three SERVINGMEN.*

**CAPULET***(giving the FIRST SERVINGMAN a piece of*



**Original Text**

guests invite as here are writ.

*Exit* **FIRST SERVINGMAN**

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

You shall have none ill, sir, for I'll try if they can lick their fingers.

**CAPULET**

How canst thou try them so?

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

- 5 Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers. Therefore he that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

**CAPULET**

Go, be gone.

We shall be much unfurnished for this time.

*Exit* **SECOND SERVINGMAN**

What, is my daughter gone to Friar Lawrence?

**NURSE**

Ay, forsooth.

**CAPULET**

- 10 Well, he may chance to do some good on her. A peevish self-willed harlotry it is.

*Enter* **JULIET**

**Modern Text**

*paper*) Invite all the guests on this list.

*The* **FIRST SERVINGMAN** *exits.*

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Boy, go hire twenty skilled cooks.

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

You won't get any bad cooks from me. I'll test them by making them lick their fingers.

**CAPULET**

How can you test them like that?

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

Easy, sir. It's a bad cook who can't lick his own fingers. So the cooks who can't lick their fingers aren't hired.

**CAPULET**

Go, get out of here.

*The* **SECOND SERVINGMAN** *exits.*

We're unprepared for this wedding celebration. (to the NURSE) What, has my daughter gone to see Friar Lawrence?

**NURSE**

Yes, that's true.

**CAPULET**

Well, there's a chance he may do her some good. She's a stubborn little brat.

*JULIET enters.*

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 2**

**NURSE**

See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

**CAPULET**

How now, my headstrong? Where have you been gadding?

**JULIET**

Where I have learned me to repent the sin

- 15 Of disobedient opposition  
To you and your behests, and am enjoined  
By holy Lawrence to fall prostrate here  
To beg your pardon. (*falls to her knees*)  
Pardon, I beseech you!

- 20 Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

**CAPULET**

Send for the county. Go tell him of this.  
I'll have this knot knit up tomorrow morning.

**JULIET**

I met the youthful lord at Lawrence's cell,  
And gave him what becomèd love I might,

- 25 Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

**CAPULET**

**NURSE**

Look, she's come home from confession with a happy look on her face.

**CAPULET**

So, my headstrong daughter, where have you been?

**JULIET**

I went somewhere where I learned that being disobedient to my father is a sin. Holy Father Lawrence instructed me to fall on my knees and beg your forgiveness. (*she kneels down*) Forgive me, I beg you. From now on I'll do whatever you say.

**CAPULET**

Send for the Count. Go tell him about this. I'll make this wedding happen tomorrow morning.

**JULIET**

I met the young man at Lawrence's cell. I treated him with the proper love, as well as I could, while still being modest.

**CAPULET**

**Original Text**

Why, I am glad on 't. This is well. Stand up.

*JULIET stands up*

This is as 't should be.—Let me see the county.  
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—  
Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar!

30 Our whole city is much bound to him.

**JULIET**

Nurse, will you go with me into my closet  
To help me sort such needful ornaments  
As you think fit to furnish me tomorrow?

**Modern Text**

Well, I'm glad about this. This is good. Stand up.

*JULIET stands up.*

This is the way it should be. I want to see the  
count. Yes, alright, go, I say, and bring him here.  
Now, before God, our whole city owes this friar a  
great debt.

**JULIET**

Nurse, will you come with me to my closet and  
help me pick out the clothes and the jewelry I'll  
need to wear tomorrow?

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3**

**LADY CAPULET**

No, not till Thursday. There is time enough.

**CAPULET**

35 Go, Nurse. Go with her. We'll to church tomorrow.

*Exeunt JULIET and NURSE*

**LADY CAPULET**

We shall be short in our provision.  
'Tis now near night.

**CAPULET**

Tush, I will stir about,  
And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.  
Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her.

40 I'll not to bed tonight. Let me alone.

I'll play the housewife for this once.

*LADY CAPULET exits.*

—What, ho?

They are all forth?—Well, I will walk myself  
To County Paris, to prepare him up  
Against tomorrow. My heart is wondrous light

45 Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed.

*Exit*

**LADY CAPULET**

No, not until Thursday. There's plenty of time.

**CAPULET**

Go, Nurse, go with her. We'll have the wedding at  
the church tomorrow.

*JULIET and the NURSE exit.*

**LADY CAPULET**

Our supplies will be short for the party. It's  
already almost night.

**CAPULET**

Don't worry, I will set things in motion. And  
everything will be alright, I promise you, wife. You  
should go to Juliet and dress her up. I'm not  
going to bed tonight. Leave me alone. I'll pretend  
to be the housewife for once.

*LADY CAPULET exits.*

Hey! What? They're all gone? Well, I will walk by  
myself to Count Paris to get him ready for  
tomorrow. My heart is wonderfully happy because  
this troubled girl has been taken back and now  
will be married.

*CAPULET exits.*

**Act 4, Scene 3**

*Enter JULIET and NURSE*

**JULIET**

Ay, those attires are best. But, gentle Nurse,  
I pray thee, leave me to myself tonight,  
For I have need of many orisons  
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,  
5 Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

*Enter LADY CAPULET*

**LADY CAPULET**

What, are you busy, ho? Need you my help?

**JULIET**

No, madam. We have culled such necessaries  
As are behooveful for our state tomorrow.  
So please you, let me now be left alone,

*JULIET and the NURSE enter.*

**JULIET**

Yes, those are the best clothes. But, gentle  
Nurse, please leave me alone tonight. I have to  
say a lot of prayers to make the heavens bless  
me. You know that my life is troubled and full of  
sin.

*LADY CAPULET enters.*

**LADY CAPULET**

What, are you busy? Do you need my help?

**JULIET**

No, madam, we've figured out the best things for  
me to wear tomorrow at the ceremony. So if it's  
okay with you, I'd like to be left alone now. Let the

## Original Text

- 10 And let the Nurse this night sit up with you.  
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all  
In this so sudden business.

**LADY CAPULET**

Good night.  
Get thee to bed and rest, for thou hast need.

*Exeunt LADY CAPULET and NURSE*

**JULIET**

- Farewell!—God knows when we shall meet again.  
15 I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins  
That almost freezes up the heat of life.  
I'll call them back again to comfort me.—  
Nurse!—What should she do here?

## Modern Text

Nurse sit up with you tonight. I'm sure you have  
your hands full preparing for the sudden  
festivities.

**LADY CAPULET**

Good night. Go to bed and get some rest. I'm  
sure you need it.

*LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.*

**JULIET**

Good-bye. Only God knows when we'll meet  
again. There is a slight cold fear cutting through  
my veins. It almost freezes the heat of life. I'll call  
them back here to comfort me. Nurse!—Oh, what  
good would she do here?  
In my desperate situation, I have to act alone.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 2

- My dismal scene I needs must act alone.  
20 Come, vial. (*holds out the vial*)  
What if this mixture do not work at all?  
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?  
No, no. This shall forbid it. Lie thou there.  
(*lays her knife down*)  
25 What if it be a poison, which the friar  
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,  
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored  
Because he married me before to Romeo?  
I fear it is. And yet, methinks, it should not,  
30 For he hath still been tried a holy man.  
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.  
Shall I not, then, be stifled in the vault  
35 To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?  
Or, if I live, is it not very like  
The horrible conceit of death and night,  
Together with the terror of the place—  
40 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,  
Where for these many hundred years the bones  
Of all my buried ancestors are packed;  
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,  
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,  
45 At some hours in the night spirits resort—?  
Alack, alack, is it not like that I,  
So early waking, what with loathsome smells,  
And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,  
That living mortals, hearing them, run mad—?

Alright, here's the vial. What if this mixture  
doesn't work at all? Will I be married tomorrow  
morning? No, no, this knife will stop it. Lie down  
right there.  
(*she lays down the knife*) What if the Friar mixed  
the potion to kill me? Is he worried that he will be  
disgraced if I marry Paris after he married me to  
Romeo? I'm afraid that it's poison. And yet, it  
shouldn't be poison because he is a trustworthy  
holy man. What if, when I am put in the tomb, I  
wake up before Romeo comes to save me?  
That's a frightening idea. Won't I suffocate in the  
tomb? There's no healthy air to breathe in there.  
Will I die of suffocation before Romeo comes? Or  
if I live, I'll be surrounded by death and darkness.  
It will be terrible. There will be bones hundreds of  
years old in that tomb, my ancestors' bones.  
Tybalt's body will be in there, freshly entombed,  
and his corpse will be rotting. They say that  
during the night the spirits are in tombs. Oh no,  
oh no. I'll wake up and smell awful odors. I'll hear  
screams that would drive people crazy.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 3

- 50 Oh, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
Environèd with all these hideous fears,  
And madly play with my forefather's joints,

If I wake up too early, won't I go insane with all  
these horrible, frightening things around me, start  
playing with my ancestors' bones, and pull

## Original Text

And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,  
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
 55 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?  
 Oh, look! Methinks I see my cousin's ghost  
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body  
 Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!  
 Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here's drink. I drink to thee.

*She drinks and falls down on the bed, hidden by the  
 bed curtains*

## Modern Text

Tybalt's corpse out of his death shroud? Will I  
 grab one of my dead ancestor's bones and bash  
 in my own skull? Oh, look! I think I see my cousin  
 Tybalt's ghost. He's looking for Romeo because  
 Romeo killed him with his sword. Wait, Tybalt,  
 wait! Romeo, Romeo, Romeo! Here's a drink. I  
 drink to you.

*She drinks from the vial and falls on her bed,  
 hidden by her bed curtains.*

## Act 4, Scene 4

*Enter LADY CAPULET and NURSE*

**LADY CAPULET**

Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, Nurse.

**NURSE**

They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

*Enter CAPULET*

**CAPULET**

Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock hath crowed.  
 The curfew bell hath rung. 'Tis three o'clock.—

5 Look to the baked meats, good Angelica.  
 Spare not for the cost.

**NURSE**

Go, you cot-quean, go.  
 Get you to bed, faith. You'll be sick tomorrow  
 For this night's watching.

**CAPULET**

No, not a whit, what. I have watched ere now  
 10 All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

**LADY CAPULET**

Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt in your time,  
 But I will watch you from such watching now.

*Exeunt LADY CAPULET and NURSE*

**CAPULET**

A jealous hood, a jealous hood!

*Enter three or four SERVINGMEN with spits and logs  
 and baskets*

Now, fellow,  
 What is there?

*LADY CAPULET and the NURSE enter.*

**LADY CAPULET**

Wait. Take these keys and get more spices,  
 Nurse.

**NURSE**

They're calling for dates and quinces in the pastry  
 kitchen.

*CAPULET enters.*

**CAPULET**

Come on, wake up, wake up, wake up! The  
 second cock crowed. The curfew-bell rang. It's  
 three o'clock. Go get the baked meats, good  
 Angelica. Don't worry about the cost.

**NURSE**

Go, you old housewife, go. Go to bed, dear. You'll  
 be sick tomorrow because you've stayed up all  
 night.

**CAPULET**

No, not at all. What? I've stayed up all night many  
 times before for less important matters, and I've  
 never gotten sick.

**LADY CAPULET**

Yes, you've been a ladies' man in your time. But  
 I'll make sure you don't stay up any later now.

*LADY CAPULET and the NURSE exit.*

**CAPULET**

A jealous woman, a jealous woman!

*Three or four SERVINGMEN enter with spits,  
 logs, and baskets.*

Now, fellow, what have you got there?

## Act 4, Scene 4, Page 2

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

15 Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.

**CAPULET**

Make haste, make haste, sirrah.

*Exit FIRST SERVINGMAN*

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

Things for the cook, sir. But I don't know what  
 they are.

**CAPULET**

Hurry up, hurry up.

*The FIRST SERVINGMAN exits.*

## Original Text

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) Fetch drier logs.  
Call Peter. He will show thee where they are.

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,  
20 And never trouble Peter for the matter.

*Exit SECOND SERVINGMAN*

**CAPULET**

Mass, and well said. A merry whoreson, ha!  
Thou shalt be loggerhead.—Good faith, 'tis day.  
The county will be here with music straight,  
For so he said he would. I hear him near.—

*Music plays within*

25 Nurse! Wife! What, ho? What, Nurse, I say!

*Enter NURSE*

Go waken Juliet. Go and trim her up.  
I'll go and chat with Paris. Hie, make haste,  
Make haste. The bridegroom he is come already.  
Make haste, I say.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

(to SECOND SERVINGMAN) You, fetch logs that  
are drier than these. Call Peter, he'll show you  
where they are.

**SECOND SERVINGMAN**

I'm smart enough to find the logs myself without  
bothering Peter.

*The SECOND SERVINGMAN exits.*

**CAPULET**

Right, and well said. That guy's funny. He's got a  
head full of logs. Goodness, it's daylight. The  
count will be here soon with music. At least he  
said he would. I hear him coming near.

*Music plays offstage.*

Nurse! Wife! What? Hey, Nurse!

*The NURSE returns.*

Go wake Juliet. Go and get her dressed. I'll go  
and chat with Paris. Hey, hurry up, hurry up! The  
bridegroom is already here. Hurry up, I say.

*They exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 5

*Enter NURSE*

**NURSE**

Mistress! What, mistress! Juliet!—Fast, I warrant her,  
she.—  
Why, lamb! Why, lady! Fie, you slug-a-bed.  
Why, love, I say. Madam! Sweet-heart! Why, bride!  
5 What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now.  
Sleep for a week, for the next night, I warrant,  
The County Paris hath set up his rest  
That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,  
Marry, and amen. How sound is she asleep!  
10 I must needs wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!  
Ay, let the county take you in your bed.  
He'll fright you up, i' faith. Will it not be?  
*(opens the bed curtains)*  
What, dressed and in your clothes, and down again?  
15 I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady!—  
Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady's dead!—  
Oh, welladay, that ever I was born!—  
Some aqua vitae, ho!—My lord! My lady!

*Enter LADY CAPULET*

**LADY CAPULET**

What noise is here?

**NURSE**

O lamentable day!

**LADY CAPULET**

What is the matter?

**NURSE**

Look, look. O heavy day!

*The NURSE enters.*

**NURSE**

Mistress! Hey, mistress! Juliet! I bet she's fast  
asleep. Hey, lamb! Hey, lady! Hey, you lazy  
bones! Hey, love, I say! Madam! Sweetheart!  
Hey, bride! What, you don't say a word? You take  
your beauty sleep now. Get yourself a week's  
worth of sleep. Tomorrow night, I bet, Count Paris  
won't let you get much rest. God forgive me.  
Alright, and amen. How sound asleep she is! I  
must wake her up. Madam, madam, madam!  
Yes, let the count take you in your bed. He'll  
wake you up, I bet. Won't he?  
*(she opens the bed curtains)* What? You're still  
dressed in all your clothes. But you're still asleep.  
I must wake you up. Lady! Lady! Lady! Oh no, oh  
no! Help, help! My lady's dead! Oh curse the day  
that I was born! Ho! Get me some brandy! My  
lord! My lady!

*LADY CAPULET enters.*

**LADY CAPULET**

What's all the noise in here?

**NURSE**

Oh, sad day!

**LADY CAPULET**

What is the matter?

**NURSE**

Look, look! Oh, what a sad day!

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 4, Scene 5, Page 2

**LADY CAPULET**

20 O me, O me! My child, my only life,  
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—  
Help, help! Call help.

*Enter CAPULET*

**CAPULET**

For shame, bring Juliet forth. Her lord is come.

**NURSE**

She's dead, deceased, she's dead. Alack the day!

**LADY CAPULET**

25 Alack the day. She's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

**CAPULET**

Ha? Let me see her. Out, alas! She's cold.  
Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff.  
Life and these lips have long been separated.  
Death lies on her like an untimely frost  
30 Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

**NURSE**

O lamentable day!

**LADY CAPULET**

O woeful time.

**CAPULET**

Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,  
Ties up my tongue and will not let me speak.

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE, County PARIS,  
and MUSICIANS*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**CAPULET**

35 Ready to go, but never to return.  
O son! The night before thy wedding day  
Hath death lain with thy wife. There she lies,  
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.

**LADY CAPULET**

Oh my, Oh my! My child, my reason for living,  
wake up, look up, or I'll die with you! Help, help!  
Call for help.

*CAPULET enters.*

**CAPULET**

For shame, bring Juliet out here. Her bridegroom  
is here.

**NURSE**

She's dead, deceased, she's dead. Curse the  
day!

**LADY CAPULET**

Curse the day! She's dead, she's dead, she's  
dead!

**CAPULET**

No! Let me see her. Oh no! She's cold. Her blood  
has stopped, and her joints are stiff. She's been  
dead for some time. She's dead, like a beautiful  
flower, killed by an unseasonable frost.

**NURSE**

Oh, sad day!

**LADY CAPULET**

Oh, this is a painful time!

**CAPULET**

Death, which has taken her away to make me  
cry, now ties up my tongue and won't let me  
speak.

*FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter  
with MUSICIANS.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**CAPULET**

She's ready to go, but she'll never  
return. (to PARIS) Oh son! On the night before  
your wedding day, death has taken your wife.  
There she lies. She was a flower, but death  
deflowered her.

## Act 4, Scene 5, Page 3

Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir.  
40 My daughter he hath wedded. I will die,  
And leave him all. Life, living, all is Death's.

**PARIS**

Have I thought long to see this morning's face,  
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

**LADY CAPULET**

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!

Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir. My  
daughter married death. I will die and leave  
everything. Life, wealth, everything belongs to  
Death.

**PARIS**

Have I waited so long to see this morning,  
only to see this?

**LADY CAPULET**

Accursed, unhappy, wretched, hateful day! This is

**Original Text**

45 Most miserable hour that e'er time saw  
 In lasting labor of his pilgrimage.  
 But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,  
 But one thing to rejoice and solace in,  
 And cruel death hath caught it from my sight!

**NURSE**

50 O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!  
 Most lamentable day, most woeful day  
 That ever, ever, I did yet behold!  
 O day, O day, O day, O hateful day!  
 Never was seen so black a day as this.  
 55 O woeful day, O woeful day!

**PARIS**

Beguiled, divorcèd, wrongèd, spited, slain!  
 Most detestable Death, by thee beguiled,  
 By cruel, cruel thee quite overthrown!  
 O love! O life! Not life, but love in death.

**CAPULET**

60 Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed!  
 Uncomfortable time, why camest thou now  
 To murder, murder our solemnity?  
 O child, O child! My soul, and not my child!  
 Dead art thou! Alack, my child is dead,  
 65 And with my child my joys are buried.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Peace, ho, for shame! Confusion's cure lives not  
 In these confusions. Heaven and yourself  
 Had part in this fair maid. Now heaven hath all,

**Modern Text**

the most miserable hour of all time! I had only  
 one child, one poor child, one poor and loving  
 child, the one thing I had to rejoice and comfort  
 myself, and cruel Death has stolen it from me!

**NURSE**

Oh pain! Oh painful, painful, painful day! The  
 saddest day, most painful day that I ever, ever did  
 behold! Oh day! Oh day! Oh day! Oh hateful day!  
 There has never been so black a day as today.  
 Oh painful day, Oh painful day!

**PARIS**

She was tricked, divorced, wronged, spited,  
 killed! Death, the most despicable thing, tricked  
 her. Cruel, cruel Death killed her. Oh love! Oh life!  
 There is no life, but my love is dead!

**CAPULET**

Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed!  
 Why did this have to happen now? Why did  
 Death have to ruin our wedding? Oh child! Oh  
 child! My soul and not my child! You are dead! Oh  
 no! My child is dead. My child will be buried, and  
 so will my joys.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Be quiet, for shame! The cure for confusion is not  
 yelling and screaming. You had this child with the  
 help of heaven. Now heaven has her.

**Act 4, Scene 5, Page 4**

And all the better is it for the maid.

70 Your part in her you could not keep from death,  
 But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.  
 The most you sought was her promotion,  
 For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced.  
 And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced  
 75 Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?  
 Oh, in this love, you love your child so ill  
 That you run mad, seeing that she is well.  
 She's not well married that lives married long,  
 But she's best married that dies married young.  
 80 Dry up your tears and stick your rosemary  
 On this fair corse, and, as the custom is,  
 And in her best array, bear her to church.  
 For though some nature bids us all lament,  
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

**CAPULET**

85 All things that we ordained festival  
 Turn from their office to black funeral.  
 Our instruments to melancholy bells,  
 Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast.  
 Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,  
 90 Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,

She is in a better place. You could not prevent  
 her from dying someday, but heaven will give her  
 eternal life. The most you hope for was for her to  
 marry wealthy and rise up the social ladder—that  
 was your idea of heaven. And now you cry, even  
 though she has risen up above the clouds, as  
 high as heaven itself? Oh, in this love, you love  
 your child so badly, that you go mad, even though  
 she is in heaven. It is best to marry well and die  
 young, better than to be married for a long time.  
 Dry up your tears, and put your rosemary on this  
 beautiful corpse. And, in accordance with custom,  
 carry her to the church in her best clothes. It's  
 natural for us to shed tears for her, but the truth  
 is, we should be happy for her.

**CAPULET**

All the things that we prepared for the wedding  
 party will now be used for the funeral. Our happy  
 music will now be sad. Our wedding banquet will  
 become a sad burial feast. Our celebratory  
 hymns will change to sad funeral marches. Our  
 bridal flowers will cover a buried corpse. And

**Original Text**

And all things change them to the contrary.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him;  
And go, Sir Paris. Every one prepare  
To follow this fair corse unto her grave.

95 The heavens do lour upon you for some ill.  
Move them no more by crossing their high will.

*Exeunt CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS,  
and FRIAR LAWRENCE*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone.

**Act 4, Scene 5, Page 5****NURSE**

Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,  
For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

*Exit*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

100 Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

*Enter PETER*

**PETER**

Musicians, O musicians, "Heart's Ease," "Heart's  
Ease." O, an you will have me live, play "Heart's  
Ease."

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Why "Heart's ease?"

**PETER**

O musicians, because my heart itself plays "My  
Heart is Full." O, play me some merry dump to  
comfort me.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Not a dump, we. 'Tis no time to play now.

**PETER**

105 You will not then?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

No.

**PETER**

I will then give it you soundly.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

What will you give us?

**PETER**

No money, on my faith, but the glee. I will give you  
the minstrel.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

110 Then I will give you the serving creature.

**Modern Text**

everything will be used for the opposite purpose  
from what we intended.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Sir, you go in. And, madam, go with him. And you  
go too, Sir Paris. Everyone prepare to take this  
beautiful corpse to her grave. The heavens hang  
threateningly over you for some past sin. Don't  
disturb the heavens any more by trying to go  
against heaven's will.

*CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, PARIS,  
and FRIAR LAWRENCE exit.*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Well, we can put away our pipes and go home.

**NURSE**

Honest good boys, ah, put 'em away, put 'em  
away. As you know, this is a sad case.

*The NURSE exits.*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Yes, well, things could get better.

*PETER enters.*

**PETER**

Musicians, oh, musicians, play "Heart's Ease,"  
"Heart's Ease." Oh, I'll die if you don't play  
"Heart's Ease."

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Why "Heart's Ease"?

**PETER**

Oh, musicians, because my heart is singing "My  
Heart is Full of Woe." Oh, play me some happy  
sad song to comfort me.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

No, not a sad song. It's not the right time to play.

**PETER**

You won't, then?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

No.

**PETER**

Then I'll really give it to you.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

What will you give us?

**PETER**

No money, I swear. But I'll play a trick on you. I'll  
call you a minstrel.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Then I'll call you a serving-creature.

**Act 4, Scene 5, Page 6**



## Original Text

**PETER**

Then will I lay the serving creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets. I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you. Do you note me?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

An you *re* us and *fa* us, you note us.

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

Pray you, put up your dagger and put out your wit.

**PETER**

Then have at you with my wit. I will dry-beat you with an iron wit and put up my iron dagger. Answer me like men.

*(sings)*

*When griping grief the heart doth wound  
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,  
Then music with her silver sound—*

*(speaks)* Why “silver sound”? Why “music with her silver sound”? What say you, Simon Catling?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

120 Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

**PETER**

Prates.—What say you, Hugh Rebeck?

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

I say, “silver sound” because musicians sound for silver.

**PETER**

Prates too.—What say you, James Soundpost?

**THIRD MUSICIAN**

Faith, I know not what to say.

## Act 4, Scene 5, Page 7

**PETER**

125 Oh, I cry you mercy, you are the singer. I will say for you. It is “music with her silver sound” because musicians have no gold for sounding.

*(sings)*

*Then music with her silver sound  
With speedy help doth lend redress.*

*Exit PETER*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

What a pestilent knave is this same!

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here, tarry for the mourners and stay dinner.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

**PETER**

Then I'll smack you on the head with the serving-creature's knife. I won't mess around. I'll make you sing. Do you hear me?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

If you make us sing, you'll hear us.

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

Please, put down your knife and stop kidding around.

**PETER**

So you don't like my kidding around! I'll kid you to death, and then I'll put down my knife. Answer me like men.

*(sings)*

*When sadness wounds your heart,  
And pain takes over your mind,  
Then music with her silver sound—*

*(speaks)* Why the line “silver sound”? What do they mean, “music with her silver sound”? What do you say, Simon Catling?

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Well, sir, because silver has a sweet sound.

**PETER**

That's a stupid answer! What do you say, Hugh Rebeck?

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

I say “silver sound,” because musicians play to earn silver.

**PETER**

Another stupid answer! What do you say, James Soundpost?

**THIRD MUSICIAN**

Well, I don't know what to say.

**PETER**

Oh, I beg your pardon. You're the singer. I'll answer for you. It is “music with her silver sound,” because musicians have no gold to use to make sounds.

*(sings)*

*Then music with her silver sound  
makes you feel just fine.*

*PETER exits.*

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

What an annoying man, this guy is!

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

Forget about him, Jack! Come, we'll go in there. We'll wait for the mourners and stay for dinner.

*The MUSICIANS exit.*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 5, Scene 1

*Enter ROMEO**ROMEO enters.***ROMEO**

If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,  
 My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.  
 My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne,  
 And all this day an unaccustomed spirit  
 5 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.  
 I dreamt my lady came and found me dead—  
 Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think—  
 And breathed such life with kisses in my lips  
 10 That I revived and was an emperor.  
 Ah me! How sweet is love itself possessed  
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

*Enter ROMEO's man BALTHASAR*

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?  
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?  
 How doth my lady? Is my father well?  
 15 How fares my Juliet? That I ask again,  
 For nothing can be ill if she be well.

**BALTHASAR**

Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.  
 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,  
 And her immortal part with angels lives.  
 20 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault  
 And presently took post to tell it you.  
 O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,  
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

**ROMEO**

If I can trust my dreams, then some joyful news is coming soon. Love rules my heart, and all day long a strange feeling has been making me cheerful. I had a dream that my lady came and found me dead. It's a strange dream that lets a dead man think! She came and brought me back to life by kissing my lips. I rose from the dead and was an emperor. Oh my! How sweet it would be to actually have the woman I love, when merely thinking about love makes me so happy.

*ROMEO's servant BALTHASAR enters.*

Do you have news from Verona!—What is it, Balthasar? Do you bring me a letter from the friar? How is my wife? Is my father well? How is my Juliet? I ask that again because nothing can be wrong if she is well.

**BALTHASAR**

Then she is well, and nothing is wrong. Her body sleeps in the Capulet tomb, and her immortal soul lives with the angels in heaven. I saw her buried in her family's tomb, and then I came here to tell you the news. Oh, pardon me for bringing this bad news, but you told me it was my job, sir.

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 2

**ROMEO**

Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!  
 25 Thou know'st my lodging. Get me ink and paper,  
 And hire post horses. I will hence tonight.

**BALTHASAR**

I do beseech you, sir, have patience.  
 Your looks are pale and wild, and do import  
 Some misadventure.

**ROMEO**

30 Tush, thou art deceived.  
 Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.  
 Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

**BALTHASAR**

No, my good lord.

**ROMEO**

No matter. Get thee gone,  
 35 And hire those horses. I'll be with thee straight.

*Exit BALTHASAR*

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.

**ROMEO**

Is it really true? Then I rebel against you, stars!  
 You know where I live. Get me some ink and paper, and hire some horses to ride. I will leave here for Verona tonight.

**BALTHASAR**

Please, sir, have patience. You look pale and wild as if you're going to hurt yourself.

**ROMEO**

Tsk, you're wrong. Leave me and do what I told you to do. Don't you have a letter for me from the friar?

**BALTHASAR**

No, my good lord.

**ROMEO**

No matter. Get on your way and hire those horses. I'll be with you right away.

*BALTHASAR exits.*

Well, Juliet, I'll lie with you tonight. Let's see how.

## Original Text

- Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift  
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!  
I do remember an apothecary—  
40 And hereabouts he dwells—which late I noted  
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,  
Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,  
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones,  
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
45 An alligator stuffed, and other skins  
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves  
A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,  
Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,  
50 Were thinly scattered to make up a show.

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 3

- Noting this penury, to myself I said,  
“An if a man did need a poison now”—  
Whose sale is present death in Mantua—  
“Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.”  
55 Oh, this same thought did but forerun my need,  
And this same needy man must sell it me.  
As I remember, this should be the house.  
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.  
What, ho! Apothecary!

*Enter APOTHECARY*

**APOTHECARY**

Who calls so loud?

**ROMEO**

- 60 Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.  
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have  
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear  
As will disperse itself through all the veins  
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,  
65 And that the trunk may be discharged of breath  
As violently as hasty powder fired  
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

**APOTHECARY**

Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law  
Is death to any he that utters them.

**ROMEO**

- 70 Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,  
And fear'st to die? Famine is in thy cheeks.  
Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes.  
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back.  
The world is not thy friend nor the world's law.  
75 The world affords no law to make thee rich.  
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.  
(*holds out money*)

## Modern Text

Destructive thoughts come quickly to the minds of desperate men! I remember a pharmacist who lives nearby. I remember he wears shabby clothes and has bushy eyebrows. He makes drugs from herbs. He looks poor and miserable and worn out to the bone. He had a tortoise shell hanging up in his shop as well as a stuffed alligator and other skins of strange fish. There were a few empty boxes on his shelves, as well as green clay pots, and some musty seeds. There were a few strands of string and mashed rose petals on display.

Noticing all this poverty, I said to myself, “If a man needed some poison”—which they would immediately kill you for selling in Mantua—“here is a miserable wretch who'd sell it to him.” Oh, this idea came before I needed the poison. But this same poor man must sell it to me. As I remember, this should be the house. Today's a holiday, so the beggar's shop is shut. Hey! Pharmacist!

*The APOTHECARY enters.*

**APOTHECARY**

Who's that calling so loud?

**ROMEO**

Come here, man. I see that you are poor. Here are forty ducats. Let me have a shot of poison, something that works so fast that the person who takes it will die as fast as gunpowder exploding in a canon.

**APOTHECARY**

I have lethal poisons like that. But it's against the law to sell them in Mantua, and the penalty is death.

**ROMEO**

You're this poor and wretched and still afraid to die? Your cheeks are thin because of hunger. I can see in your eyes that you're starving. Anyone can see that you're a beggar. The world is not your friend, and neither is the law. The world doesn't make laws to make you rich. So don't be poor. Break the law, and take this money. (*he holds out money*)

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 4

## Original Text

**APOTHECARY**

My poverty, but not my will, consents.

**ROMEO**

I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

**APOTHECARY**

- 80 *(gives ROMEO poison)* Put this in any liquid thing  
you will  
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength  
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

**ROMEO**

*(gives APOTHECARY money)*

- There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,  
85 Doing more murder in this loathsome world,  
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.  
I sell thee poison. Thou hast sold me none.  
Farewell. Buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—  
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me  
90 To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

**APOTHECARY**

I agree because I'm poor, not because I want to.

**ROMEO**

I pay you because you're poor, not because you want me to buy this.

**APOTHECARY**

*(gives ROMEO poison)* Put this in any kind of liquid you want and drink it down. Even if you were as strong as twenty men, it would kill you immediately.

**ROMEO**

*(gives APOTHECARY money)* There is your gold. Money is a worse poison to men's souls, and commits more murders in this awful world, than these poor poisons that you're not allowed to sell. I've sold *you* poison. You haven't sold me any. Goodbye. Buy yourself food, and put some flesh on your bones. I'll take this mixture, which is a medicine, not a poison, to Juliet's grave. That's where I must use it.

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 2

*Enter FRIAR JOHN*

**FRIAR JOHN**

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, ho!

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

This same should be the voice of Friar John.  
Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo?  
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

**FRIAR JOHN**

- 5 Going to find a barefoot brother out,  
One of our order, to associate me,  
Here in this city visiting the sick,  
And finding him, the searchers of the town,  
Suspecting that we both were in a house  
10 Where the infectious pestilence did reign,  
Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth.  
So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

**FRIAR JOHN**

- I could not send it—here it is again—  
15 *(gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter)*  
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,  
So fearful were they of infection.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

- Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,  
The letter was not nice but full of charge,  
20 Of dear import, and the neglecting it

*FRIAR JOHN enters.*

**FRIAR JOHN**

Holy Franciscan Friar! Brother, hey!

*FRIAR LAWRENCE enters.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That sounds like the voice of Friar John.  
Welcome back from Mantua. What does Romeo say? Or, if he wrote down his thoughts, give me his letter.

**FRIAR JOHN**

I went to find another poor friar from our order to accompany me. He was here in this city visiting the sick. When I found him, the town health officials suspected that we were both in a house that had been hit with the plague. They quarantined the house, sealed up the doors, and refused to let us out. I couldn't go to Mantua because I was stuck there.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Then who took my letter to Romeo?

**FRIAR JOHN**

I couldn't send it. Here it is. *(he gives FRIAR LAWRENCE a letter)* I couldn't get a messenger to bring it to you either because they were scared of spreading the infection.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood, the letter was not just a nice greeting. It was full of very important information. It's very dangerous that it

## Original Text

May do much danger. Friar John, go hence.  
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight  
Unto my cell.

## Modern Text

hasn't been sent. Friar John, go and get me an  
iron crowbar. Bring it straight back to my cell.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 2

**FRIAR JOHN**

Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

*Exit FRIAR JOHN*

**FRIAR JOHN**

Brother, I'll go and bring it to you.

*FRIAR JOHN exits.*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Now must I to the monument alone.

25 Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.

She will beshrew me much that Romeo

Hath had no notice of these accidents.

But I will write again to Mantua,

And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.

30 Poor living corpse, closed in a dead man's tomb!

*Exit*

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Now I must go to the tomb alone. Within three  
hours Juliet will wake up. She'll be very angry  
with me that Romeo doesn't know what  
happened. But I'll write again to Mantua, and I'll  
keep her in my cell until Romeo comes. That poor  
living corpse. She's shut inside a dead man's  
tomb!

*FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.*

## Act 5, Scene 3

*Enter PARIS and his PAGE*

**PARIS**

Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.

Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.

Under yon yew trees lay thee all along,

Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground—

5 So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread,

Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,

But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,

As signal that thou hear'st something approach.

Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

*PAGE extinguishes torch, gives PARIS flowers*

**PAGE**

10 *(aside)* I am almost afraid to stand alone

Here in the churchyard. Yet I will adventure.

*PAGE moves aside*

**PARIS**

*(scatters flowers at JULIET'S closed tomb)*

Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew—

O woe! Thy canopy is dust and stones—

15 Which with sweet water nightly I will dew.

Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans,

The obsequies that I for thee will keep

Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

*PAGE whistles*

The boy gives warning something doth approach.

20 What cursèd foot wanders this way tonight

To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?

What with a torch! Muffle me, night, awhile.

*PARIS enters with his PAGE.*

**PARIS**

Give me your torch, boy. Go away and stay apart

from me. Put the torch out, so I can't be seen.

Hide under the yew-trees over there. Listen to

make sure no one is coming through the

graveyard. If you hear any one, whistle to me to

signal that someone is approaching. Give me

those flowers. Do as I tell you. Go.

*The PAGE puts out the torch and  
gives PARIS the flowers.*

**PAGE**

*(to himself)* I am almost afraid to stand alone here  
in the graveyard, but I'll take the risk.

*The PAGE moves aside*

**PARIS**

*(he scatters flowers at JULIET'S closed*

*tomb)* Sweet flower, I'm spreading flowers over

your bridal bed. Oh, pain! Your canopy is dust

and stones. I'll water these flowers every night

with sweet water. Or, if I don't do that, my nightly

rituals to remember you will be to put flowers on

your grave and weep.

*The PAGE whistles*

The boy is warning me that someone

approaches. Who could be walking around here

tonight? Who's ruining my rituals of true love?

It's someone with a torch! I must hide in the

darkness for awhile.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 2

**PARIS** moves away from the tomb  
Enter **ROMEO** and **BALTHASAR**

**PARIS** hides in the  
darkness. **ROMEO** and **BALTHASAR** enter with a  
torch, a pickax, and an iron crowbar.

**ROMEO**

Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.  
(takes them from **BALTHASAR**)

25 Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning  
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.  
(gives letter to **BALTHASAR**)

Give me the light.  
(takes torch from **BALTHASAR**)

Upon thy life I charge thee,  
30 Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,  
And do not interrupt me in my course.  
Why I descend into this bed of death  
Is partly to behold my lady's face,  
But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger  
35 A precious ring, a ring that I must use  
In dear employment. Therefore hence, be gone.  
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry  
In what I farther shall intend to do,  
By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint  
40 And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.  
The time and my intents are savage, wild,  
More fierce and more inexorable far  
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

**BALTHASAR**

45 I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

**ROMEO**

So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that.  
(gives **BALTHASAR** money)  
Live and be prosperous, and farewell, good fellow.

**ROMEO**

Give me that pickax and the crowbar. (he takes  
them from **BALTHASAR**) Here, take this letter.  
Early in the morning deliver it to my father. (he  
gives the letter to **BALTHASAR**) Give me the  
light. (he takes the torch  
from **BALTHASAR**) Swear on your life, I  
command you, whatever you hear or see, stay  
away from me and do not interrupt me in my plan.  
I'm going down into this tomb of the dead, partly  
to behold my wife's face. But my main reason is  
to take a precious ring from her dead finger. I  
must use that ring for an important purpose. So  
go on your way. But if you get curious and return  
to spy on me, I swear I'll tear you apart limb by  
limb and spread your body parts around to feed  
the hungry animals in the graveyard. My plan is  
wild and savage. I am more fierce in this  
endeavor than a hungry tiger or the raging sea.

**BALTHASAR**

I'll go, sir, and I won't bother you.

**ROMEO**

That's the way to show me friendship. Take  
this. (he gives **BALTHASAR** money) Live and be  
prosperous. Farewell, good fellow.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 3

**BALTHASAR**

(aside) For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.  
50 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

**BALTHASAR** moves aside, falls asleep

**ROMEO**

Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,  
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,  
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,  
And in despite I'll cram thee with more food!  
55 (begins to open the tomb with his tools)

**PARIS**

(aside) This is that banished haughty Montague,  
That murdered my love's cousin, with which grief,  
It is supposed the fair creature died.

**BALTHASAR**

(speaking so that only **PARIS** can hear) Despite  
what I said, I'll hide nearby. I'm frightened by the  
look on his face, and I have doubts about his  
intentions.

**BALTHASAR** moves aside and falls asleep.

**ROMEO**

(speaking to the tomb) You horrible mouth of  
death! You've eaten up the dearest creature on  
Earth. Now I'm going to force open your rotten  
jaws and make you eat another  
body. (**ROMEO** begins to open the tomb with his  
tools)

**PARIS**

(speaking so that **ROMEO** can't hear) It's that  
arrogant Montague, the one who's been  
banished. He's the one who murdered my love's

## Original Text

And here is come to do some villainous shame  
 60 To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.  
 (to ROMEO) Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!  
 Can vengeance be pursued further than death?  
 Condemnèd villain, I do apprehend thee.  
 Obey and go with me, for thou must die.

65

**ROMEO**

I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.  
 Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.  
 Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone.  
 Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,  
 70 Put not another sin upon my head  
 By urging me to fury. O, be gone!  
 By heaven, I love thee better than myself,  
 For I come hither armed against myself.  
 Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say  
 75 A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

## Modern Text

cousin Tybalt. They think she died with grief for that cousin. This guy has come here to commit awful crimes against the dead bodies. I'll catch him.

(to ROMEO) Stop your evil work, vile Montague! Can you take revenge on dead bodies? Condemned villain, I've caught you. Obey and come with me. You must die.

**ROMEO**

I must indeed. That's why I came here. Good and noble young man, don't mess with someone who's desperate. Get away from here and leave me. Think about the ones who have died. Let them put fear in your heart. Please, young man, don't make me angry. I don't want to commit another crime. Oh, go away! I swear, I love you more than I love myself. For I've come here with weapons to use against myself. Don't stay here, go away. Live, and from now on, say a madman mercifully told you to run away.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 4

**PARIS**

I do defy thy commination  
 And apprehend thee for a felon here.

**ROMEO**

Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy!

*ROMEO and PARIS fight*

**PAGE**

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

*Exit PAGE*

**PARIS**

80 (falls) Oh, I am slain! If thou be merciful,  
 Open the tomb. Lay me with Juliet.

*PARIS dies*

**ROMEO**

In faith, I will.—Let me peruse this face.  
 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris.  
 What said my man, when my betossèd soul  
 85 Did not attend him as we rode? I think  
 He told me Paris should have married Juliet.  
 Said he not so? Or did I dream it so?  
 Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,  
 To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,  
 90 One writ with me in sour misfortune's book.  
 I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.

*ROMEO opens the tomb to reveal JULIET inside*

A grave? Oh, no. A lantern, slaughtered youth,

**PARIS**

I refuse your request. I'm arresting you as a criminal.

**ROMEO**

Are you going to provoke me? Alright, let's fight, boy!

*ROMEO and PARIS fight.*

**PAGE**

Oh Lord, they're fighting! I'll go call the watch.

*The PAGE exits.*

**PARIS**

(he falls) Oh, I've been killed!  
 If you are merciful, open the tomb and lay me next to Juliet.

*PARIS dies.*

**ROMEO**

Alright, I will. Let me look at this face. It's Mercutio's relative, noble Count Paris! What did my man say? I was worried, so I wasn't listening to him while we were riding. I think he told me Paris was about to marry Juliet. Isn't that what he said? Or was I dreaming? Or am I crazy? Did I hear him say something about Juliet and jump to conclusions? Oh, give me your hand. Both of us had such bad luck! I'll bury you in a magnificent grave.

*ROMEO opens the tomb to reveal JULIET inside.*

A grave? Oh no! This is a lantern, dead Paris.

## Original Text

For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes  
This vault a feasting presence full of light.  
95 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred.  
(lays PARIS in the tomb)

## Modern Text

Juliet lies here, and her beauty fills this tomb with  
light. Dead men, lie there. You are being buried  
by another dead man. (*he lays PARIS in the  
tomb*)

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 5

How oft when men are at the point of death  
Have they been merry, which their keepers call  
A lightning before death! Oh, how may I  
100 Call this a lightning?—O my love, my wife!  
Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,  
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.  
Thou art not conquered. Beauty's ensign yet  
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
105 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.—  
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?  
O, what more favor can I do to thee,  
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain  
To sunder his that was thine enemy?  
110 Forgive me, cousin.—Ah, dear Juliet,  
Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe  
That unsubstantial death is amorous,  
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps  
Thee here in dark to be his paramour?  
115 For fear of that, I still will stay with thee,  
And never from this palace of dim night  
Depart again. Here, here will I remain  
With worms that are thy chamber maids. Oh, here  
Will I set up my everlasting rest,  
120 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars  
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last.  
Arms, take your last embrace. And, lips, O you  
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss  
A dateless bargain to engrossing death.  
125 (*kisses JULIET, takes out the poison*)  
Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide.  
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on  
The dashing rocks thy seasick, weary bark.  
Here's to my love! (*drinks the poison*) O true  
130 apothecary,  
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

**ROMEO dies**

How often are men happy right before they die!  
They call it the lightness before death. Oh, how  
can I call this lightness? Oh, my love! My wife!  
Death has sucked the honey from your breath,  
but it has not yet ruined your beauty. You haven't  
been conquered. There is still red in your lips and  
in your cheeks. Death has not yet turned them  
pale. Tybalt, are you lying there in your bloody  
death shroud? Oh, what better favor can I do for  
you than to kill the man who killed you with the  
same hand that made you die young. Forgive  
me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet, why are you still so  
beautiful? Should I believe that death is in love  
with you, and that the awful monster keeps you  
here to be his mistress? I don't like that idea, so  
I'll stay with you. And I will never leave this tomb.  
Here, here I'll remain with worms that are your  
chamber-maids. Oh, I'll rest here forever. I'll  
forget about all the bad luck that has troubled  
me. Eyes, look out for the last time! Arms, make  
your last embrace! And lips, you are the doors of  
breath. Seal with a righteous kiss the deal I have  
made with death  
forever. (*ROMEO kisses JULIET and takes out  
the poison*) Come, bitter poison, come, unsavory  
guide! You desperate pilot, let's crash this sea-  
weary ship into the rocks! Here's to my love!  
*ROMEO drinks the poison.*  
Oh, that pharmacist was honest! His drugs work  
quickly. So I die with a kiss.

**ROMEO dies.**

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 6

Enter **FRIAR LAWRENCE** with lantern, crow, and  
spade

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Saint Francis be my speed! How oft tonight  
Have my old feet stumbled at graves!—Who's there?

**BALTHASAR**

Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE** enters with a lantern,  
crowbar, and shovel.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Saint Francis, help me! How often tonight have  
my old feet stumbled on gravestones! Who's  
there?

**BALTHASAR**

I'm a friend, a friend who knows you well.



## Original Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,  
 135 What torch is yond that vainly lends his light  
 To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,  
 It burneth in the Capels' monument.

**BALTHASAR**

It doth so, holy sir, and there's my master,  
 One that you love.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Who is it?

**BALTHASAR**

Romeo.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

140 How long hath he been there?

**BALTHASAR**

Full half an hour.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Go with me to the vault.

**BALTHASAR**

I dare not, sir.

My master knows not but I am gone hence,  
 And fearfully did menace me with death  
 If I did stay to look on his intents.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

145 Stay, then. I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me.  
 Oh, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

## Modern Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

God bless you! Tell me, my good friend, what is  
 that light over there? The one that vainly lights  
 up the darkness for worms and skulls without  
 eyes? It looks to me like it's burning in the  
 Capulet tomb.

**BALTHASAR**

That is where it's burning, father. My master is  
 there. The one you love.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Who is it?

**BALTHASAR**

Romeo.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

How long has he been there?

**BALTHASAR**

For a full half hour.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Go with me to the tomb.

**BALTHASAR**

I don't dare, sir. My master doesn't know I'm still  
 here. He threatened me with death if I stayed to  
 look at what he was doing.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

Stay, then. I'll go alone. I'm suddenly afraid. Oh,  
 I'm very scared something awful has happened.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 7

**BALTHASAR**

As I did sleep under this yew tree here,  
 I dreamt my master and another fought,  
 And that my master slew him.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

150 (*approaches the tomb*)

Romeo!—

Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains  
 The stony entrance of the sepulcher?  
 What mean these masterless and gory swords  
 To lie discolored by this place of peace?

155 (*looks inside the tomb*)

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? What, Paris too?  
 And steeped in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour  
 Is guilty of this lamentable chance!  
 The lady stirs.

*JULIET wakes*

**JULIET**

160 O comfortable Friar! Where is my lord?  
 I do remember well where I should be,  
 And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

*A noise sounds from outside the tomb*

**BALTHASAR**

As I slept under this yew-tree here, I had a  
 dream that my master and someone else were  
 fighting and that my master killed him.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

(*approaching the tomb*) Romeo!

Oh no! What is this blood that stains the stony  
 entrance of this tomb? Why are these bloody  
 swords lying here, abandoned by their masters?  
 Next to this place of peace?

(*he looks inside the tomb*) Romeo! Oh, he's pale!

Who else? What, Paris too? And he's covered in  
 blood? Ah, when did these horrible things  
 happen? The lady's moving.

*JULIET wakes up.*

**JULIET**

Oh friendly friar! Where is my husband? I  
 remember very well where I should be, and here  
 I am. Where is my Romeo?

*A noise sounds from outside the tomb.*

## Original Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest  
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.

- 165 A greater power than we can contradict  
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.  
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead,  
And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee  
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.  
170 Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.  
Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

## Modern Text

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I hear some noise. Lady, come out of the tomb.  
A greater power than we can fight has ruined our  
plan. Come, come away. Your husband lies dead  
there, and Paris too. Come, I'll place you among  
the sisterhood of holy nuns. Don't wait to ask  
questions. The watch is coming. Come, let's go,  
good Juliet, I don't dare stay any longer.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 8

**JULIET**

Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—

*Exit FRIAR LAWRENCE*

What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?  
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.—

- 175 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,  
To make me die with a restorative.  
(*kisses ROMEO*)  
180 Thy lips are warm.

*Enter WATCHMEN and PARIS's PAGE*

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

(*to PAGE*) Lead, boy. Which way?

**JULIET**

Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger,  
This is thy sheath. There rust and let me die.  
(*stabs herself with ROMEO's dagger and dies*)

**PAGE**

- 185 This is the place. There, where the torch doth burn.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

The ground is bloody.—Search about the  
churchyard.  
Go, some of you. Whoe'er you find, attach.

*Exeunt some WATCHMEN*

Pitiful sight! Here lies the county slain,  
And Juliet bleeding, warm and newly dead,  
190 Who here hath lain these two days buried.—  
Go, tell the Prince. Run to the Capulets.  
Raise up the Montagues.  
Some others search.

*Exeunt more WATCHMEN*

**JULIET**

Go, get out of here. I'm not going anywhere.

*FRIAR LAWRENCE exits.*

What's this here? It's a cup, closed in my true  
love's hand? Poison, I see, has been the cause  
of his death. How rude! He drank it all, and didn't  
leave any to help me afterward. I will kiss your  
lips. Perhaps there's still some poison on them,  
to make me die with a medicinal kiss. (*she*  
*kisses ROMEO*) Your lips are warm.

*WATCHMEN and PARIS's PAGE enter.*

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

(*coming to the PAGE*) Lead, boy. Which way?

**JULIET**

Oh, noise? Then I'll be quick. Oh, good, a knife!  
My body will be your sheath.  
Rust inside my body and let me die.  
(*she stabs herself with ROMEO's dagger and*  
*dies*)

**PAGE**

This is the place. There, where the torch is  
burning.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

The ground is bloody. Search the graveyard. Go,  
some of you, arrest whoever you find.

*Some WATCHMEN exit.*

This is a pitiful sight! The count is dead. Juliet is  
bleeding. Her body is warm, and she seems to  
have been dead only a short time, even though  
she has been buried for two days. Go, tell the  
Prince. Run to the Capulets. Wake up the  
Montagues. Have some others search.

*Some other WATCHMEN exit in several*  
*directions.*

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 9

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,

We see the cause of all this pain. But we'll have

## Original Text

195 But the true ground of all these piteous woes  
We cannot without circumstance descry.

*Reenter SECOND WATCHMAN with ROMEO's  
man BALTHASAR*

**SECOND WATCHMAN**

Here's Romeo's man. We found him in the churchyard.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

Hold him in safety till the Prince come hither.

*Reenter THIRD WATCHMAN with FRIAR  
LAWRENCE*

**THIRD WATCHMAN**

Here is a friar that trembles, sighs and weeps.

200 We took this mattock and this spade from him  
As he was coming from this churchyard's side.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

A great suspicion. Stay the friar too.

*Enter the PRINCE with ATTENDANTS*

**PRINCE**

What misadventure is so early up  
That calls our person from our morning rest?

*Enter CAPULET and LADY CAPULET*

**CAPULET**

205 What should it be that is so shrieked abroad?

**LADY CAPULET**

Oh, the people in the street cry "Romeo,"  
Some "Juliet," and some "Paris," and all run  
With open outcry toward our monument.

## Modern Text

to investigate to discover the whole story.

*The SECOND WATCHMAN reenters  
with BALTHASAR.*

**SECOND WATCHMAN**

Here's Romeo's man. We found him in the churchyard.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

Hold him in custody until the Prince gets here.

*The THIRD WATCHMAN reenters with FRIAR  
LAWRENCE.*

**THIRD WATCHMAN**

Here is a friar who's trembling, sighing and weeping. We took this pickax and this shovel from him, as he was walking from this side of the graveyard.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

Very suspicious. Hold the friar too.

*The PRINCE enters with ATTENDANTS.*

**PRINCE**

What crimes happen so early in the morning that I have to wake up before the usual time?

*CAPULET and LADY CAPULET enter.*

**CAPULET**

What's the problem, that they cry out so loud?

**LADY CAPULET**

Some people in the street are crying "Romeo."  
Some are crying "Juliet," and some are crying  
"Paris." They're all running in an open riot toward  
our tomb.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 10

**PRINCE**

What fear is this which startles in our ears?

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

210 Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain,  
And Romeo dead, and Juliet, dead before,  
Warm and new killed.

**PRINCE**

Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

215 Here is a friar, and slaughtered Romeo's man,  
With instruments upon them fit to open  
These dead men's tombs.

**CAPULET**

O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!  
This dagger hath mista'en—for, lo, his house  
Is empty on the back of Montague,

220 And it mis-sheathèd in my daughter's bosom.

**PRINCE**

What's this awful thing that everyone's crying about?

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

Prince, here lies Count Paris killed. And Romeo dead. And Juliet. She was dead before, but now she's warm and hasn't been dead for long.

**PRINCE**

Investigate how this foul murder came about.

**CHIEF WATCHMAN**

Here is a friar, and dead Romeo's man. They've got tools on them—tools they could use to open these tombs.

**CAPULET**

Oh heavens! Oh wife, look at how our daughter bleeds! That knife should be in its sheath on that Montague's back, but instead it's mis-sheathed in my daughter's breast.

## Original Text

**LADY CAPULET**

O me! This sight of death is as a bell,  
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

*Enter MONTAGUE*

**PRINCE**

Come, Montague, for thou art early up  
To see thy son and heir now early down.

**MONTAGUE**

225 Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight.  
Grief of my son's exile hath stopped her breath.  
What further woe conspires against mine age?

**PRINCE**

Look, and thou shalt see.

**MONTAGUE**

(to ROMEO) O thou untaught! What manners is in  
230 this,  
To press before thy father to a grave?

## Modern Text

**LADY CAPULET**

Oh my! This sight of death is like a bell that  
warns me I'm old and I'll die soon.

*MONTAGUE enters.*

**PRINCE**

Come, Montague. You're up early to see your  
son down early.

**MONTAGUE**

Oh, my liege, my wife died tonight. Sadness over  
my son's exile stopped her breath. What further  
pain must I endure in my old age?

**PRINCE**

Look, and you'll see.

**MONTAGUE**

(*seeing ROMEO's body*) Oh, you undisciplined  
boy! Where are your manners? It's not right for a  
son to push past his father on his way to the  
grave.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 11

**PRINCE**

Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,  
Till we can clear these ambiguities  
And know their spring, their head, their true descent,  
And then will I be general of your woes,  
235 And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,  
And let mischance be slave to patience.—  
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I am the greatest, able to do least,  
Yet most suspected, as the time and place  
240 Doth make against me, of this direful murder.  
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge,  
Myself condemnèd and myself excused.

**PRINCE**

Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I will be brief, for my short date of breath  
245 Is not so long as is a tedious tale.  
Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet,  
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife.  
I married them, and their stol'n marriage day  
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death  
250 Banished the new-made bridegroom from the city—  
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.  
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,  
Betrothed and would have married her perforce  
To County Paris. Then comes she to me,  
255 And with wild looks bid me devise some mean  
To rid her from this second marriage,  
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.  
Then gave I her, so tutored by my art,

**PRINCE**

Be quiet and hold back your remarks of outrage,  
until we can clear up these questions. We want  
to know how it started and what really happened.  
And then I'll be the leader of pain, and maybe I'll  
lead you as far as death. In the meantime, hold  
on, and be patient. Bring forth the men under  
suspicion.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I am the greatest, but I was able to do the least. I  
am under the most suspicion, because I was  
here at the time of this awful murder. And here I  
stand, you can question me and punish me. I  
have already condemned and excused myself.

**PRINCE**

Tell us what you know about this affair.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

I will be brief because I'm not going to live long  
enough to tell a boring story. Romeo, who lies  
there dead, was the husband of that Juliet. And  
she, who lies there dead, was that Romeo's  
faithful wife. I married them; their secret wedding  
day was the day Tybalt died. His untimely death  
caused the bridegroom to be banished from the  
city. Juliet was sad because Romeo was gone,  
not because of Tybalt's death. To cure her  
sadness, you arranged a marriage for her with  
Count Paris. Then she came to me, and, looking  
wild, she asked me to devise a plan to get her  
out of this second marriage. She threatened to  
kill herself in my cell if I didn't help her. So I gave  
her a sleeping potion that I had mixed with my

**Original Text**

A sleeping potion, which so took effect  
 260 As I intended, for it wrought on her  
 The form of death.

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 12**

Meantime I writ to Romeo,  
 That he should hither come as this dire night,  
 To help to take her from her borrowed grave,  
 Being the time the potion's force should cease.  
 265 But he which bore my letter, Friar John,  
 Was stayed by accident, and yesternight  
 Returned my letter back. Then all alone  
 At the prefixed hour of her waking  
 Came I to take her from her kindred's vault,  
 270 Meaning to keep her closely at my cell  
 Till I conveniently could send to Romeo,  
 But when I came, some minute ere the time  
 Of her awakening, here untimely lay  
 The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.  
 275 She wakes, and I entreated her come forth,  
 And bear this work of heaven with patience.  
 But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,  
 And she, too desperate, would not go with me,  
 But, as it seems, did violence on herself.  
 280 All this I know, and to the marriage  
 Her Nurse is privy. And if aught in this  
 Miscarried by my fault, let my old life  
 Be sacrificed some hour before his time  
 Unto the rigor of severest law.

**PRINCE**

285 We still have known thee for a holy man.—  
 Where's Romeo's man? What can he say in this?

**BALTHASAR**

I brought my master news of Juliet's death,  
 And then in post he came from Mantua  
 To this same place, to this same monument.  
 290 (*shows a letter*) This letter he early bid me give his  
 father,  
 And threatened me with death, going in the vault,  
 If I departed not and left him there.

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 13****PRINCE**

Give me the letter. I will look on it.  
 (*takes letter from BALTHASAR*)  
 295 Where is the county's page, that raised the watch?—  
 Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

**PAGE**

He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave,  
 And bid me stand aloof, and so I did.  
 Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb,

**Modern Text**

special skills. It worked as planned. She seemed  
 to everyone to be dead.

In the meantime I wrote to Romeo and told him  
 to come here on this awful night to help remove  
 her from her temporary grave when the sleeping  
 potion wore off. But the man who carried my  
 letter, Friar John, was held up by an accident.  
 Last night he gave me the letter back. So I came  
 here alone at the hour when she was supposed  
 to wake up. I came to take her out of her family's  
 tomb, hoping to hide her in my cell until I could  
 make contact with Romeo. But by the time I got  
 here, just a few minutes before Juliet woke up,  
 Paris and Romeo were already dead. She woke  
 up, and I asked her to come out of the tomb with  
 me and endure this tragedy with patience. But  
 then a noise sent me running scared from the  
 tomb. She was too desperate to come with me,  
 and it seems that she killed herself. I know all of  
 this. And her Nurse knows about the marriage  
 too. If any part of this tragedy is my fault, let my  
 old life be sacrificed and let me suffer the most  
 severe punishment.

**PRINCE**

We have always known you to be a holy man.  
 Where's Romeo's man? What does he have to  
 say about this?

**BALTHASAR**

I brought my master news of Juliet's death. And  
 then he rode from Mantua here to this tomb. (*he  
 shows a letter*) Earlier this morning he asked me  
 to give this letter to his father. When he went into  
 the vault, he threatened me with death if I didn't  
 leave him alone there.

**PRINCE**

Give me the letter. I'll look at it. (*he takes the  
 letter from BALTHASAR*) Where is the count's  
 page, the one who called the watch? Boy, what  
 was your master doing here?

**PAGE**

He came with flowers to spread on his lady's  
 grave. And he asked me to stand far away and  
 leave him alone, and so I did. Then someone

**Original Text**

300 And by and by my master drew on him,  
And then I ran away to call the watch.

**PRINCE**

*(skims the letter)* This letter doth make good the  
friar's words,  
Their course of love, the tidings of her death.

305 And here he writes that he did buy a poison  
Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal  
Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.  
Where be these enemies?—Capulet! Montague!  
See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,  
310 That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!  
And I, for winking at your discords, too  
Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished.

**CAPULET**

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

**MONTAGUE**

But I can give thee more,  
315 For I will raise her statue in pure gold,  
That whiles Verona by that name is known,  
There shall no figure at such rate be set  
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

**CAPULET**

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie,  
320 Poor sacrifices of our enmity.

**Modern Text**

with a torch came to open the tomb. So my  
master drew on him. And then I ran away to call  
the watch.

**PRINCE**

*(skimming the letter)* This letter confirms the  
friar's account. It describes the course of their  
love and mentions the news of her death. Here  
he writes that he bought poison from a poor  
pharmacist. He brought that poison with him to  
this vault to die and lie with Juliet. Where are  
these enemies? Capulet! Montague! Do you see  
what a great evil results from your hate? Heaven  
has figured out how to kill your joys with love.  
Because I looked the other way when your feud  
flared up, I've lost several members of my family  
as well. Everyone is punished.

**CAPULET**

Oh, brother Montague, give me your hand. This  
is my daughter's dowry. I can ask you for nothing  
more.

**MONTAGUE**

But I can give you more. I'll raise her statue in  
pure gold. As long as this city is called Verona,  
there will be no figure praised more than that of  
true and faithful Juliet.

**CAPULET**

The statue I will make of Romeo to lie beside his  
Juliet will be just as rich. They were poor  
sacrifices of our rivalry!

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 14****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 pardoned, and some punished.  
325 For never was a story of more woe  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

**PRINCE**

We settle a dark peace this morning. The sun is  
too sad to show itself. Let's go, to talk about  
these sad things some more. Some will be  
pardoned, and some will be punished.  
There was never a story more full of pain than  
the story of Romeo and Juliet.

*Exeunt*

*They all exit.*