

William Shakespeare

Romeo And Juliet

Dramatis Personae

Escalus, Prince of Verona.

Mercutio, kinsman to the Prince, and friend to Romeo.

Paris, a young Nobleman, kinsman to the Prince.

Page to Paris.

Montague, head of a Veronese family at feud with the Capulets.

Lady Montague, wife to Montague.

Romeo, son to Montague.

Benvolio, nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo.

Abram, servant to Montague.

Balthasar, servant to Romeo.

Capulet, head of a Veronese family at feud with the Montagues.

Lady Capulet, wife to Capulet.

Juliet, daughter to Capulet.

Tybalt, nephew to Lady Capulet.

Capulet's Cousin, an old man.

Nurse to Juliet.

Peter, servant to Juliet's Nurse.

Sampson, servant to Capulet.

Gregory, servant to Capulet.

Servants.

Friar Lawrence, a Franciscan.

Friar John, of the same Order.

An Apothecary.

Chorus.

Three **Musicians.**

An Officer.

Citizens of Verona; several Men and Women,
relations to both houses;

Maskers, Guards, Watchmen and Attendants.

SCENE. During the greater part of the Play in
Verona; once, in the Fifth Act, at Mantua.

The Prologue

Enter Chorus.

Chorus.

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,

And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could
remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which, if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to
mend.

[Exit.]

Act I

Scene I

A public place.

*Enter Sampson and Gregory armed with
swords and bucklers.*

Sampson.

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

Gregory.

No, for then we should be colliers.

Sampson.

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

Gregory.

Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the
collar.

Sampson.

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.

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

Gregory.

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

Sampson.

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.

They must take it in sense that feel it.

Gregory.

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

Sampson.

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them,
which is disgrace to
them if they bear it.

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.

Is the law of our side if I say ay?

Gregory.

No.

Sampson.

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

Gregory.

Do you quarrel, sir?

Abram.

Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

Sampson.

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

Abram.

No better.

Sampson.

Well, sir.

Enter Benvolio.

Gregory.

Say better; here comes one of my master's
kinsmen.

Sampson.

Yes, better, sir.

Abram.

You lie.

Sampson.

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

[They fight.]

Benvolio.

Part, fools! put up your swords, you know not
what you do.

[Beats down their swords.]

Enter Tybalt.

Tybalt.

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

Benvolio.

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

Tybalt.

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

[They fight.]

Enter three or four Citizens with clubs.

First citizen.

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

Enter Capulet in his gown, and Lady Capulet.

Capulet.

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

Lady Capulet.

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

Capulet.

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

Enter Montague and his Lady Montague.

Montague.

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

Lady Montague.

Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

[Exeunt Prince and Attendants; Capulet, Lady Capulet, Tybalt, Citizens and Servants.]

Montague.

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

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 prepar'd,
Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn.
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows
Came more and more, and fought on part and
part,
Till the Prince came, who parted either part.

Lady Montague.

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

Benvolio.

Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east,
A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad,

Benvolio.

My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

Montague.

I neither know it nor can learn of him.

Benvolio.

Have you importun'd him by any means?

Montague.

Both by myself and many other friends;
But he, his own affections' counsellor,
Is to himself-I will not say how true —
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.

Could we but learn from whence his sorrows

grow,

We would as willingly give cure as know.

Enter Romeo.

Benvolio.

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

Montague.

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

[Exeunt Montague and Lady Montague.]

Benvolio.

Good morrow, cousin.

Romeo.

Is the day so young?

Benvolio.

But new struck nine.

Romeo.

Ay me, sad hours seem long.
Was that my father that went hence so fast?

Benvolio.

It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

Romeo.

Not having that which, having, makes them short.

Benvolio.

In love?

Romeo.

Out.

Benvolio.

Of love?

Romeo.

Out of her favour where I am in love.

Benvolio.

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

Romeo.

Alas that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see pathways to his will!
Where shall we dine? O me! What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O anything, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick
health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

Benvolio.

No coz, I rather weep.

Romeo.

Good heart, at what?

Benvolio.

At thy good heart's oppression.

Romeo.

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

[Going.]

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.

Tell me in sadness who is that you love?

Romeo.

What, shall I groan and tell thee?

Benvolio.

Groan! Why, no; but sadly tell me who.

Romeo.

Bid a sick man in sadness make his will,
A word ill urg'd to one that is so ill.
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

Benvolio.

I aim'd so near when I suppos'd you lov'd.

Romeo.

A right good markman, and she's fair I love.

Benvolio.

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

Romeo.

Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit
With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit;
And in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,
From love's weak childish bow she lives
uncharm'd.

She will not stay the siege of loving terms
Nor bide th'encounter of assailing eyes,
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:
O she's rich in beauty, only poor
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.

Benvolio.

Then she hath sworn that she will still live
chaste?

Romeo.

She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;
For beauty starv'd with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.
She is too fair, too wise; wisely too fair,
To merit bliss by making me despair.
She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

Benvolio.

Be rul'd by me, forget to think of her.

Romeo.

O teach me how I should forget to think.

Benvolio.

By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.

Romeo.

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

Benvolio.

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

[Exeunt.]

Scene II

A Street.

Enter Capulet, Paris and 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 honourable reckoning are you both,
And pity 'tis you liv'd at odds so long.
But now my lord, what say you to my suit?

Capulet.

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

Paris.

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Capulet.

And too soon marr'd are those so early made.
The earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she,

She is the hopeful lady of my earth:
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
And she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love, and you among the store,
One more, most welcome, makes my number
more.

At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house. Hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be:
Which, on more view of many, mine, being one,
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.
Come, go with me. Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out
Whose names are written there, [*gives a paper*]
and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[Exeunt Capulet and Paris.]

Benvolio.

For what, I pray thee?

Romeo.

For your broken shin.

Benvolio.

Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Romeo.

Not mad, but bound more than a madman is:
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd and tormented and-God-den, good
fellow.

Servant.

God gi' go-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

Romeo.

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Servant.

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.

Servant.

Ye say honestly, rest you merry!

Romeo.

Stay, fellow; I can read.

[He reads the letter.]

_Signior Martino and his wife and daughters;
County Anselmo and his beauteous sisters;
The lady widow of Utruvio;
Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces;
Mercutio and his brother Valentine;
Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters;
My fair niece Rosaline and Livia;
Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt;
Lucio and the lively Helena. _

A fair assembly. *[Gives back the paper]* Whither
should they come?

Servant.

Up.

Romeo.

Whither to supper?

Romeo.

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

Benvolio.

Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at this 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 splendour of my own.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III

Room in Capulet's House.

Enter Lady Capulet and Nurse.

Lady Capulet.

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

Nurse.

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

Enter Juliet.

Juliet.

How now, who calls?

Nurse.

Your mother.

Juliet.

Madam, I am here. What is your will?

Lady Capulet.

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

I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel.
Thou knowest my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse.

Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

Lady Capulet.

She's not fourteen.

Nurse.

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,
And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four,
She is not fourteen. How long is it now
To Lammas-tide?

Lady Capulet.

A fortnight and odd days.

Nurse.

Even or odd, of all days in the year,
Come Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she, — God rest all Christian souls! —
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God;
She was too good for me. But as I said,
On Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen;
That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years;
And she was wean'd, — I never shall forget it-,

Lady Capulet.

Enough of this; I pray thee hold thy peace.

Nurse.

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

Juliet.

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

Nurse.

Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd:
And I might live to see thee married once, I have
my wish.

Lady Capulet.

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

Juliet.

It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse.

An honour! Were not I thine only nurse,
I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy
teat.

Lady Capulet.

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

Nurse.

A man, young lady! Lady, such a man
As all the world-why he's a man of wax.

Lady Capulet.

Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

Nurse.

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

Lady Capulet.

What say you, can you love the gentleman?

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

Nurse.

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

Enter a Servant.

Servant.

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

Lady Capulet.

We follow thee.

[Exit Servant.]

Juliet, the County stays.

Nurse.

Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

[Exeunt.]

Scene IV

A Street.

*Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio, with five or
six Maskers; Torch-bearers and others.*

Romeo.

What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?

Or shall we on without apology?

Benvolio.

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

Romeo.

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

Mercutio.

Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Romeo.

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

Mercutio.

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

Romeo.

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

Mercutio.

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

Romeo.

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

Mercutio.

If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
Give me a case to put my visage in: [*Putting on a
mask.*]

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

Benvolio.

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

Mercutio.

Why, may one ask?

Romeo.

I dreamt a dream tonight.

Mercutio.

And so did I.

Romeo.

Well what was yours?

Mercutio.

That dreamers often lie.

Romeo.

In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

Mercutio.

O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Over men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
Her traces, of the smallest spider's web;

The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of
love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies
straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on
fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted
are:
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as a lies asleep,
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscados, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon

Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes;
And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plats the manes of horses in the night;
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:
This is she, —

Romeo.

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

Mercutio.

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

Benvolio.

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

Romeo.

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

Benvolio.

Strike, drum.

[Exeunt.]

Scene V

A Hall in Capulet's House.

Musicians waiting. Enter Servants.

First servant.

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

Second servant.

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