THE TRAGEDY ROMEO AND JULIET

by William Shakespeare

CHORUS
ROMEO
MONTAGUE, Romeo's father
LADY MONTAGUE, Romeo's mother
BENVOLIO, Montague's nephew
ABRAHAM, Montague's servingman
BALTHASAR, Romeo's man
JULIET
CAPULET, Juliet's father
LADY CAPULET, Juliet's mother
NURSE to Juliet
TYBALT, Capulet's nephew
SECOND CAPULET, Petruchio
PETER
SAMPSON servingmen to the Capulets
GREGORY
MUSICIANS
SERVINGMEN
PRINCE Escalus of Verona
MERCUTIO PARIS his kinsmen PAGE to Paris
Mercutio's Page
FRIAR LAURENCE
FRIAR JOHN
APOTHECARY
OFFICER
CONSTABLE
WATCHMEN
[Enter Chorus]

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

[Exit]

Act 1 Scene 1  
Enter Sampson and Gregory with swords and bucklers, of the House of Capulet  
SAMPSON  
Gregory, o' 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, and cut off their heads.

GREGORY
The heads of the maids?

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

GREGORY
They must take it in sense that feel it.

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

GREGORY
'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, 
thou hadst been poor-John.--Draw thy tool; 
Here comes two of the house of Montagues.

Enter two other Servingmen [Abraham and Balthasar] 

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

GREGORY
How! turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON
Fear me not.

GREGORY
No, marry; I fear thee!

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

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

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

ABRAHAM
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON
I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM
Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON
Is the law of our side if I say ay?
No.

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

GREGORY
Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM
Quarrel, sir! No, sir.

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

ABRAHAM
No better.

SAMPSON
Well, sir.

Enter Benvolio

GREGORY
Say ‘better’; here comes one of my master's kinsmen.       Aside

SAMPSON
Yes, better.

ABRAHAM
You lie.

SAMPSON
Draw, if you be men.--Gregory, remember thy swashing blow.   They fight

BENVOLIO
Part, fools! Put up your swords; you know not what you do.  Draws and parts them

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

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!                        Fight

Enter three or four
Citizens with clubs

OFFICER
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

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 Old Montague and his Wife

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

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

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

Exeunt. [Montague, Lady Montague and Benvolio remain]

MONTAGUE
Who set this ancient quarrel new abroach?--
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 prepared;
Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
Who, nothing hurt withal, hissed him in scorn:
While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
Till the prince came, who parted either part.

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

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

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

BENVOLIO
My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

MONTAGUE
I neither know it nor can learn of him.

BENVOLIO
Have you importuned him by any means?

MONTAGUE
Both by myself and many other friends;
But he, his own affections' 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 same.
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!
Mis-shapen 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 pressed
With more of thine: this love that thou hast shown
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers’ eyes;
Being vexed, a sea nourished with loving tears:
What is it else? A madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.--
Farewell, my coz.

BENVOLIO
Soft! I will go along:
An 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
A sick man in sadness makes his will,—
A word ill-urged to one that is so ill!—
In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

BENVOLIO
I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.

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

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

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

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 passed that passing fair?
Farewell: thou canst not teach me to forget.

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

Exeunt

[Act 1 Scene 2]

Enter Capulet, County Paris and the Clown [a Servingman]

CAPULET
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 lived at odds so long.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

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

PARIS
Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET
And too soon marred are those so early made.
Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she,--
She's the hopeful lady of my earth:
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustomed feast,
Whereunto 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-apparelled 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, one 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 and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

Exeunt [Capulet and Paris].

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

Enter Benvolio and Romeo

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

ROMEO
Your plaintain leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO
For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO
For your broken shin.
BENVOLIO
Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

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

SERVINGMAN
God gi'—good e'en. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO
Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

SERVINGMAN
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.

SERVINGMAN
Ye say honestly: rest you merry!

ROMEO
Stay, fellow; I can read.

*He reads the letter*

'Signior Martino and his wife and daughters,
County Anselme and his beauteous sisters, the
lady widow of Utruvio, Signior Placentio and
his lovely nieces, Mercutio and his brother
Valentine, mine uncle Capulet, his wife and
daughters, my fair niece Rosaline, Livia.; Signior
Valentio and his cousin Tybalt, Lucio and the
lively Helena.'
A fair assembly: whither should they
come?

SERVINGMAN
Up.

ROMEO

Whither? To supper?

SERVINGMAN
To our house.

ROMEO
Whose house?

SERVINGMAN
My master's.

ROMEO
Indeed, I should have asked you that before.

SERVINGMAN
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

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

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

BENVOLIO
Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weighed
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at 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 mine own.       [Exeunt]

[Act 1 Scene 3]

Enter Capulet's Wife and Nurse

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

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

Enter Juliet

JULIET
How now? Who calls?

NURSE
Your mother.

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

LADY CAPULET
This is the matter,--Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret: Nurse, come back again;
I have remembered me, thou's hear our counsel.
Thou 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 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 dove-house wall;
My lord and you were then at Mantua:
Nay, I do bear a brain:--but, as I said,
when it did taste the wormwood on the nipple
of my dug and felt it bitter, pretty fool,
to see it tetchy, and fall out with the dug!
'Shake', quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,
to bid me trudge.
And since that time it is eleven years;
for then she could stand alone; nay, by the rood
she could have run and waddled all about;
for even the day before, she broke her brow:
and then my husband,—God be with his soul!
'A was a merry man,—took up the child:
'Yea,' quoth he, 'dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit;
Wilt thou not, Jule?' And, by my holidam,
the pretty wretch left crying, and said 'Ay:'
To see now how a jest shall come about!
I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
I never should forget it; 'Wilt thou not, Jule?' quoth he;
And, pretty fool, it stinted, and said 'Ay.'

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

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

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

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

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

JULIET
It is an honour that I dream not of.

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

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

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

LADY CAPULET
Verona's summer hath not such a flower.
NURSE
Nay, he's a flower, in faith, a very flower.

LADY CAPULET
What say you? Can you love the gentleman?
This night you shall behold him at our feast;
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
Examine every married lineament,
And see how one another lends content;
And what obscured in this fair volume lies
Find written in the 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 Servingman

SERVINGMAN
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.  

Exit

LADY CAPULET
We follow thee.--
Juliet, the county stays.
NURSE
Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days. 

[Act 1 Scene 4] 

Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio, with five or six Maskers; 
Torchbearers

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

BENVOLIO
The date is out of such prolixity: 
We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked with a scarf, 
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath, 
Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper; 

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 boist’rous; and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO
If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.--
Give me a case to put my visage in:
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.

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

ROMEO
Nay, that’s not so.

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

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

MERCUTIO
Why, may one ask?

ROMEO
I dreamt a dream tonight.

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 forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Over men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The 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 wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o'mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
On 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:
Sometimes 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 he dreams of another benefice:
Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes;
And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night;
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:
This is she,—

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

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

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

ROMEO
I fear, too early: for my mind misgives
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night’s revels; and expire the term
Of a despised life, closed 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.

They march about the stage and Servingmen come forth with their napkins
Enter [Chief] Servant

CHIEF SERVINGMAN
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.

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

FIRST SERVINGMAN
Ay, boy, ready.

CHIEF SERVINGMAN
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;
Enter all the Guests and Gentlewomen to the Maskers

CAPULET
Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you.--
Ah my mistresses! which of you all
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,
She I'll swear hath corns; Am I come near ye now?
Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day
That I have worn a visor and could tell
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
Such as would please;--'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone:
You are welcome, gentlemen!--Come, musicians, play.

Music plays, and they dance

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

SECOND CAPULET
By'r lady, thirty years.

CAPULET
What, man? 'Tis not so much, 'tis not so much:
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come Pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five-and-twenty years; and then we masked.

SECOND CAPULET
'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
What lady is that, which doth enrich the hand Of yonder knight? To a Servingman

SERVINGMAN
I know not, sir.

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

TYBALT
This, by his voice, should be a Montague.-- Fetch me my rapier, boy:-- What, dares the slave [Exit a Servingman]
Come hither, covered with an antic face, To fleer and scorn at our solemnity? Now, by the stock and honour of my kin, To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

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

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

CAPULET
Young Romeo, is it?

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

TYBALT
It fits, when such a villain is a guest:
I'll not endure him.

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

TYBALT
Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

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

TYBALT
Patience perforce with willful choler meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall.
ROMEO
If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,--
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

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

ROMEO
Have not saint's lips, and holy palmers too?

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

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

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

ROMEO
Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.
Thus from my lips, by thine my sin is purged.

Kisses her

JULIET
Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

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

Kisses her again

JULIET
You kiss by the book.

NURSE
Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

Juliet stands aside

ROMEO
What is her mother?

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

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

Benvolio.
Away, begone; the sport is at the best.

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

CAPULET
Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone;  
The guests indicate that they have to leave
We have a trifling foolish banquet towards.--
Is it e'en so? Why then, I thank you all;
I thank you, honest gentlemen; goodnight.--
More torches here!--Come on then, let's to bed.  
To Servingmen
Ah, sirrah, by my fay, it waxes late;
I'll to my rest.  [Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse]

JULIET
Come hither, nurse. What is yond gentleman?

NURSE
The son and heir of old Tiberio.

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

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

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

NURSE
I know not.

JULIET
Go ask his name: If he be married, My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

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

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

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare believed to have been written in 1595