

Romeo and Juliet Act 4

**ACT 4, SCENE 1**

*Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS*

**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.

**PARIS**

20 That “may be” must be, love, on Thursday next.

**JULIET**

What must be shall be.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That's a certain text.

*FRIAR LAWRENCE and PARIS enter.*

**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.

**PARIS**

That “may be” must be, love, on Thursday.

**JULIET**

What must be will be.

**FRIAR LAWRENCE**

That is a certain truth.

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**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?

**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.

**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?

**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.

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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**

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.

### **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,

**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!

### **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

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75 Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,  
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—  
And I will do it without fear or doubt,  
90 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.  
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

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 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

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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.

### **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 afford.

130 Farewell, dear Father.

*Exeunt, separately*

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.

### **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.*

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SCENE 2

*Enter* **CAPULET, LADY CAPULET, NURSE, and two or three SERVINGMEN**

**CAPULET**

*(gives paper to FIRST SERVINGMAN)* So many 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**

**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

**CAPULET** *enters with* **LADY CAPULET, the NURSE, and two or three SERVINGMEN.**

**CAPULET**

*(giving the FIRST SERVINGMAN a piece of 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.*

**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

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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' cell,  
And gave him what becomèd love I might,  
25 Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

**CAPULET**

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?

**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.

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**

Well, I'm glad about this. This is good. Stand up.

*JULIET stands up.*

This is the way is 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?

**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

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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*

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.*

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### 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 necessities  
As are behooveful for our state tomorrow.  
So please you, let me now be left alone,  
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?  
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,

*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 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.  
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

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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—?  
50 Oh, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
Environèd with all these hideous fears,  
And madly play with my forefather's joints,  
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*

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.

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 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.*

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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?

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

15 Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.

**CAPULET**

Make haste, make haste, sirrah.

*Exit* **FIRST SERVINGMAN**

(*to* **SECOND SERVINGMAN**) Fetch drier logs.

Call Peter. He will show thee where they are.

**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?

**FIRST SERVINGMAN**

Things for the cook, sir. But I don't know what they are.

**CAPULET**

Hurry up, hurry up.

*The* **FIRST SERVINGMAN** *exits*.

(*to* **SECOND SERVINGMAN**) You, fetch logs that are drier

than these. Call Peter, he'll show you where they are.

## Romeo and Juliet Act 4

### 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*

### 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!  
What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now.  
5 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!  
I must needs wake her.—Madam, madam, madam!  
10 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?  
I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady!—  
15 Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady's dead!—  
Oh, welladay, that ever I was born!—  
Some aqua vitae, ho!—My lord! My lady!

### 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.*

*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!

Romeo and Juliet Act 4

*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!

**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?

**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!

**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?

## Romeo and Juliet Act 4

### **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.  
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!

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,

### **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.

Death is my son-in-law. Death is my heir. My daughter  
married death. I will die and leave Death 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 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.

## Romeo and Juliet Act 4

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,  
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,  
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

### 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.

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 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**

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

Faith, we may put up our pipes and be gone.

**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 gleek. I will give you the minstrel.

**FIRST MUSICIAN**

110 Then I will give you the serving creature.

**PETER**

Then will I lay the serving creature's dagger on your pate. I will

**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.

**PETER**

Then I'll smack you on the head with the serving-creature's

## Romeo and Juliet Act 4

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  
115 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.

**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!

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 studpid 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!

Romeo and Juliet Act 4

**SECOND MUSICIAN**

Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here, tarry for the mourners and stay dinner.

*Exeunt*

**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.*