

Romeo and Juliet

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Enter Capulet, Paris, and [Peter,] a servingman

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 lived at odds so long. 5
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 10
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.
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart;
My will to her consent is but a part, 15
And, she agreed, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair-according voice.
This night I hold an old-accustomed feast
Whereto I have invited many a guest
Such as I love, and you among the store, 20
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 25
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, 30

May stand in number, though in reck'ning none.
Come, go with me. (*Giving [Peter] a paper*) Go, sirrah,
trudge about;

Through fair Verona find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay. 35

Exeunt Capulet and Paris

[PETER] Find them out whose names are written here? It
is written that the shoemaker should meddle with his
yard and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his
pencil and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to
find those persons whose names are here writ, and can 40
never find what names the writing person hath here
writ. I must to the learned.

Enter Benvolio and Romeo

In good time.

BENVOLIO (*to Romeo*)

Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessened by another's anguish. 45
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 plantain leaf is excellent for that. 50

BENVOLIO For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO

Not mad, but bound more than a madman is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food, 55
Whipped and tormented and±± (*to [Peter]*) Good e'en,
good fellow.

[PETER]

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

ROMEO

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

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

ROMEO

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

[PETER] Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

ROMEO Stay, fellow, I can read.

He reads the letter

`Signor Martino and his wife and daughters,
 County Anselme and his beauteous sisters, 65
 The lady widow of Vitruvio,
 Signor Placentio and his lovely nieces,
 Mercutio and his brother Valentine,
 Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters,
 My fair niece Rosaline and Livia, 70
 Signor Valentio and his cousin Tybalt,
 Lucio and the lively Helena.'
 A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

[PETER] Up.

ROMEO Whither? 75

[PETER] To supper to our house.

ROMEO Whose house?

[PETER] My master's.

ROMEO

Indeed, I should have asked thee that before.

[PETER] Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is 80
 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, 85
 With all the admireÁd 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 90
 Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
 And these who, often drowned, could never die,
 Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars.
 One fairer than my love!±±the all-seeing sun
 Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun. 95

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, 100
And she shall scant show well that now seems best.

ROMEO

I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendour of mine own.

Exeunt