

ACT

Five

SCENE 1 *A street in Mantua.*

Balthasar, Romeo's servant, comes from Verona to tell him that Juliet is dead and lies in the Capulet's tomb. Since Romeo has not yet received any word from the Friar, he believes Balthasar. He immediately decides to return to Verona in order to die next to Juliet. He sends Balthasar away and sets out to find a pharmacist who will sell him poison.

[Enter Romeo.]

Romeo. If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand.
My bosom's lord sits lightly in his throne,
And all this day an unaccustomed spirit
5 Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.
I dreamt my lady came and found me dead
(Strange dream that gives a dead man leave to
think!)
And breathed such life with kisses in my lips
10 That I revived and was an emperor.
Ah me! how sweet is love itself possessed,
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

[Enter Romeo's servant, Balthasar, booted.]

News from Verona! How now, Balthasar?
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
15 How doth my lady? Is my father well?
How fares my Juliet? That I ask again,
For nothing can be ill if she be well.

Balthasar. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.

Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,
20 And her immortal part with angels lives.
I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault
And presently took post to tell it you.
O, pardon me for bringing these ill news,
Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

1-5 If I can trust my dreams, something joyful is about to happen. My heart (**bosom's lord**) is happy and I am content.

6-10 What was Romeo's dream?

17 If Juliet is well, no news can be bad.

18-24 Balthasar replies that Juliet is well, since although her body is dead, her soul (**her immortal part**) is with the angels. As soon as he saw her in the tomb, he immediately rode to Mantua (**presently took post**) to tell Romeo. He asks forgiveness for bringing bad news but reminds Romeo that he had given Balthasar the duty (**office**) of bringing important news.



25 **Romeo.** Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!
Thou knowst my lodging. Get me ink and paper
And hire posthorses. I will hence tonight.

Balthasar. I do beseech you, sir, have patience
Your looks are pale and wild and do import
30 Some misadventure.

Romeo. Tush, thou art deceived.
Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

Balthasar. No, my good lord.

35 **Romeo.** No matter. Get thee gone
And hire those horses. I'll be with thee straight.

[Exit Balthasar.]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.
Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!
40 I do remember an apothecary,
And hereabouts he dwells, which late I noted
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones;
45 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuffed, and other skins
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
50 Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses
Were thinly scattered, to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said,
"An if a man did need a poison now
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
55 Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him."
O, this same thought did but forerun my need,
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house.
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.
60 What, ho! apothecary!

[Enter Apothecary.]

Apothecary. Who calls so loud?

25 I defy you, stars: Romeo angrily challenges fate, which has caused him much grief.

29–30 import some misadventure: suggest that something bad will happen.

37 What does Romeo mean?

38–43 Let's see for means: Let me find a way (**means**) to join Juliet in death.
apothecary: pharmacist. **tattered weeds:** ragged clothes. **Culling of simples:** sorting herbs.

45–51 Romeo describes the items in the apothecary's shop.

52 penury: poverty.

53–55 Although it is a crime to sell poison, the apothecary is such a miserable person (**caitiff wretch**) that he would probably do it for the money.



Romeo. Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have
A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear
65 As will disperse itself through all the veins
That the life-weary taker may fall dead,
And that the trunk may be discharged of breath
As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

70 **Apothecary.** Such mortal drugs I have; but
Mantua's law
Is death to any he that utters them.

Romeo. Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness
And fearest to die? Famine is in thy cheeks,
75 Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back:
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law;
The world affords no law to make thee rich;
Then be not poor, but break it and take this.

80 **Apothecary.** My poverty but not my will consents.

Romeo. I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

Apothecary. Put this in any liquid thing you will
And drink it off, and if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

85 **Romeo.** There is thy gold—worse poison to men's
souls,
Doing more murder in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst
not sell.

90 I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.
Farewell. Buy food and get thyself in flesh.
Come, cordial and not poison, go with me
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

63–69 ducats: gold coins. Forty ducats was a large sum of money. Romeo asks for fast-acting (**soon-speeding**) poison.

70–72 Such . . . them: I have such deadly drugs, but selling them is a crime punishable by death.

73–79 Romeo argues that the man lives in such misery he has no reason to fear death or the law. He urges the apothecary to improve his situation by selling the poison.

80 I'm doing this for the money, not because I think it's right.

81 I'm not paying your conscience.

84 dispatch you straight: kill you instantly.

92 Romeo refers to the poison as a **cordial**, a drink believed to be good for the heart.



SCENE 2 *Friar Laurence's cell in Verona.*

Friar Laurence's messenger arrives saying that he was unable to deliver the letter to Romeo. Friar Laurence, his plans ruined, rushes to the Capulet vault before Juliet awakes. He intends to hide her in his room until Romeo can come to take her away.

[Verona. Friar Laurence's cell.]

[Enter Friar John.]

Friar John. Holy Franciscan friar, brother, ho!

[Enter Friar Laurence.]

Friar Laurence. This same should be the voice of
Friar John.

Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo?

5 Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

Friar John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,

One of our order to associate me,

Here in this city visiting the sick,

And finding him, the searchers of the town,

10 Suspecting that we both were in a house

Where the infectious pestilence did reign,

Sealed up the doors, and would not let us forth,

So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.

Friar Laurence. Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

15 **Friar John.** I could not send it—here it is again—

Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,

So fearful were they of infection.

Friar Laurence. Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,

The letter was not nice, but full of charge,

20 Of dear import, and the neglecting it

May do much danger. Friar John, go hence,

Get me an iron crow and bring it straight

Unto my cell.

Friar John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

[Exit.]

6–13 Friar John explains why he didn't go to Mantua. He had asked another friar (**One of our order**), who had been caring for the sick, to go with him. The health officials of the town, believing that the friars had come into contact with the deadly disease the plague (**infectious pestilence**), locked them up to keep them from infecting others.

14 bare: carried (bore).

19–21 The letter wasn't trivial (**nice**) but rather contained instructions (**charge**) of great importance (**dear import**). The fact that it wasn't sent (**neglecting it**) may cause great harm. What would the letter have told Romeo that he does not know?

22 iron crow: crowbar. Why might Friar Laurence need a crowbar?



25 **Friar Laurence.** Now must I to the monument alone.
 Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
 She will beshrew me much that Romeo
 Hath had no notice of these accidents;
 But I will write again to Mantua,
 30 And keep her at my cell till Romeo come—
 Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb!

[*Exeunt.*]

25–28 Now I must hurry to Juliet's side, since she'll awaken in three hours. Juliet will be furious with me (**beshrew me**) when she discovers that Romeo doesn't know what has happened.

SCENE 3 *The cemetery that contains the Capulets' tomb.*

In the dark of night Paris comes to the cemetery to put flowers on Juliet's grave. At the same time Romeo arrives, and Paris hides. Romeo opens the tomb and Paris assumes that he is going to harm the bodies. He challenges Romeo, who warns him to leave. They fight and Romeo kills Paris. When Romeo recognizes the dead Paris, he lays his body inside the tomb as Paris requested. Romeo declares his love for Juliet, drinks the poison, and dies. Shortly after, Friar Laurence arrives and discovers both bodies. When Juliet wakes up, the Friar urges her to leave with him before the guard comes. Juliet refuses and when the Friar leaves, she kills herself with Romeo's dagger. The guards and the Prince arrive, followed by the Capulets and Lord Montague, whose wife has just died because of Romeo's exile. Friar Laurence and both servants explain what has happened. Capulet and Montague finally end their feud and promise to erect statues honoring Romeo and Juliet.

[*Enter Paris and his Page with flowers and a torch.*]

Paris. Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.

Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.
 Under yond yew tree lay thee all along,
 Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground.
 5 So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread
 (Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves)
 But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,
 As signal that thou hearst something approach.
 Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

10 **Page.** [*Aside*] I am almost afraid to stand alone
 Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure.

[*Withdraws.*]

1–9 Paris wants nobody to know that he is visiting Juliet's tomb. He tells his servant to keep his ear to the ground and whistle if anyone comes near.



Paris. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew

[*He strews the tomb with flowers.*]

(O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones)

Which with sweet water nightly I will dew;

15 Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans.

The obsequies that I for thee will keep

Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

[*The Page whistles.*]

The boy gives warning something doth approach.

What cursed foot wanders this way tonight

20 To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?

What, with a torch? Muffle me, night, awhile.

[*Withdraws.*]

[*Enter Romeo and Balthasar with a torch, a mattock, and a crow of iron.*]

Romeo. Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.

Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning

See thou deliver it to my lord and father.

25 Give me the light. Upon thy life I charge thee,

Whate'er thou hearest or seest, stand all aloof

And do not interrupt me in my course.

Why I descend into this bed of death

Is partly to behold my lady's face,

30 But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger

A precious ring—a ring that I must use

In dear employment. Therefore hence, be gone.

But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry

In what I farther shall intend to do,

35 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint

And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.

The time and my intents are savage-wild,

More fierce and more inexorable far

Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

40 **Balthasar.** I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Romeo. So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou
that.

Live, and be prosperous; and farewell, good fellow.

12–17 Paris promises to decorate Juliet's grave with flowers, as he does now, with either perfume (**sweet water**) or tears. He will perform these honoring (**obsequies**) every night.

19–22 **What cursed . . . awhile:** who dares to interrupt my ritual? Is he ever carrying a torch? Let the darkness hide me. **mattock . . . iron:** ax and crowbar

23–24 What might Romeo have written to his father?

28–32 What two reasons does Romeo give for going into Juliet's tomb?

32 **In dear employment:** for an important purpose.

33–39 Romeo threatens that if Balthasar returns because he is curious (**jealous**) Romeo will rip him apart and throw his bones around the churchyard. His intention is more unstoppable (**inexorable**) than a hungry (**empty**) tiger or the waves of an ocean.

45 **Balthasar.** [*Aside*] For all this same, I'll hide me
hereabout.

His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

[*Withdraws.*]

Romeo. Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
50 And in despite I'll cram thee with more food.

[*Romeo opens the tomb.*]

Paris. This is that banisht haughty Montague
That murdered my love's cousin—with which grief
It is supposed the fair creature died—
And here is come to do some villainous shame
55 To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.
Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee.
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

60 **Romeo.** I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man.
Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head
65 By urging me to fury. O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself.
For I come hither armed against myself.
Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

70 **Paris.** I do defy thy conjuration
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

Romeo. Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at
thee, boy!

[*They fight.*]

Page. O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

[*Exit.*]

75 **Paris.** O, I am slain! [*Falls.*] If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[*Dies.*]

44–45 Balthasar decides to hide in the cemetery in spite of what he has just promised Romeo. Who else is hiding in the cemetery at this point?

47–50 Romeo addresses the tomb as though it were devouring people. He calls it a hateful stomach (**detestable maw**) that is filled (**gorged**) with the dearest morsel of earth, Juliet. He uses his crowbar to open its **rotten jaws** and feeds himself to it.

51–55 Paris speaks these lines to himself. He is angry with Romeo, believing that Romeo's having killed Tybalt caused Juliet to die of grief for her cousin. What does he think Romeo intends to do at the tomb?

60–69 Romeo rejects Paris' challenge. He tells Paris to think of those already killed and leave before Romeo is forced to kill him too. Romeo swears that he has come to harm himself, not Paris.

70–71 I reject your appeal (**defy thy conjuration**) and arrest you as a criminal.

Romeo. In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.
 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!
 What said my man when my betossed soul
 80 Did not attend him as we rode? I think
 He told me Paris should have married Juliet.
 Said he not so? or did I dream it so?
 Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
 To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,
 85 One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
 I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.
 A grave? O, no, a lantern, slaughtered youth,
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
 This vault a feasting presence full of light.
 90 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred.

[Lays Paris *in the tomb*.]

How oft when men are at the point of death
 Have they been merry! which their keepers call
 A lightning before death. O, how may I
 Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
 95 Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.
 Thou art not conquered. Beauty's ensign yet
 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.
 100 Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
 O, what more favor can I do to thee
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
 To sunder his that was thine enemy?
 Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,
 105 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
 That unsubstantial Death is amorous,
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
 For fear of that I still will stay with thee
 110 And never from this palace of dim night
 Depart again. Here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chambermaids. O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 115 From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!
 Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss

77–90 Romeo discovers that the man he has just killed is Paris, whom he vaguely remembers was supposed to marry Juliet. He says that like himself, Paris has been victim of bad luck. He will bury him with Juliet, whose beauty fills the tomb with light. Paris' corpse (**Death**) is being buried (**interred**) by a dead man in that Romeo expects to be dead soon.

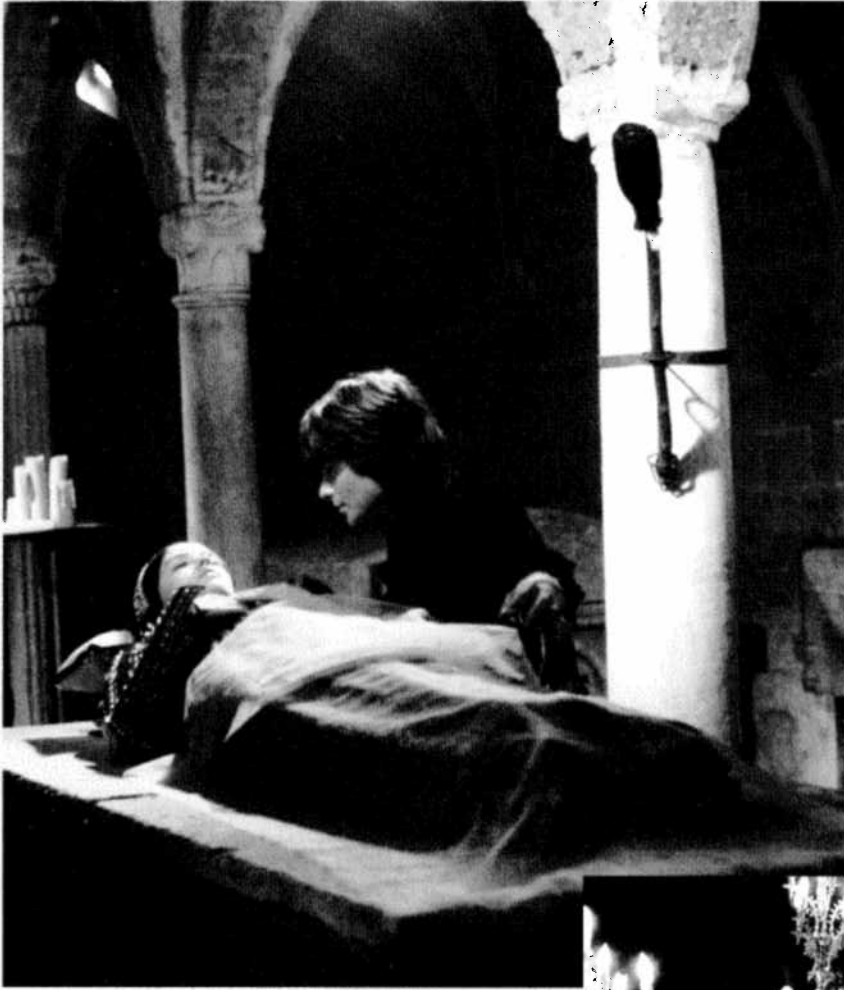
95–99 Romeo notices that death has had no effect on Juliet's beauty. The sign (**ensign**) of beauty is still in Juliet's red and rosy cheeks.

101–103 **O, what . . . enemy:** I can't repay you (Tybalt) by killing your enemy (myself) with the same hand that cut your youth in two (**twain**).

105–108 Romeo can't get over how beautiful Juliet still looks. He asks whether Death is loving (**amorous**) and whether he has taken Juliet as his lover (**paramour**).

112–115 **O, here . . . flesh:** Here I will cause my death (**everlasting rest**) and myself of the burden (**shake the yoke**) of an unhappy fate (**inauspicious stars**).

VIEW AND COMPARE



(Zeffirelli, 1968)

Each of these images shows Romeo's discovery of Juliet. Which has the more powerful impact on the viewer?



(Luhrmann, 1996)



A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct; come, unsavory guide!
120 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy seasick weary bark!
Here's to my love! [*Drinks.*] O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

[*Falls.*]

[*Enter Friar Laurence, with lantern, crow, and spade.*]

Friar Laurence. Saint Francis be my speed! how
125 oft tonight
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! Who's there?

Balthasar. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows
you well.

Friar Laurence. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good
130 my friend,
What torch is yond that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Balthasar. It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
135 One that you love.

Friar Laurence. Who is it?

Balthasar. Romeo.

Friar Laurence. How long hath he been there?

Balthasar. Full half an hour.

140 **Friar Laurence.** Go with me to the vault.

Balthasar. I dare not, sir.
My master knows not but I am gone hence,
And fearfully did menace me with death
If I did stay to look on his intents.

145 **Friar Laurence.** Stay then; I'll go alone. Fear comes
upon me.

O, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

Balthasar. As I did sleep under this yew tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
150 And that my master slew him.

Friar Laurence. Romeo!

[*Stoops and looks on the blood and weapons.*]

118 dateless: eternal; neverending.
Romeo means that what he is about to do can never be undone.

120–121 thy seasick weary bark:
Romeo compares himself to the pilot of a ship (**bark**) who is going to crash on the rocks because he is so weary and sick.

141–144 I can't go with you to the tomb. My master threatened me with death if I stayed here.

145–147 The Friar fears that something unlucky (**unthrifty**) has happened.



Alack, alack, what blood is this which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulcher?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
155 To lie discolored by this place of peace?

[*Enters the tomb.*]

Romeo! O, pale! Who else? What, Paris too?
And steeped in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs.

[*Juliet rises.*]

160 **Juliet.** O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

Friar Laurence. I hear some noise. Lady, come from
that nest

165 Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee
170 Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.
Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

Juliet. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.

[*Exit Friar Laurence.*]

175 What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips.
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them
To make me die with a restorative.

[*Kisses him.*]

180 Thy lips are warm!

Chief Watchman. [*Within*] Lead, boy. Which way?

Juliet. Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!

[*Snatches Romeo's dagger.*]

152–155 Why are these bloody swords lying here at the tomb (**sepulcher**), a place that should be peaceful? (The swords are also **masterless**, or without their owners.)

160 comfortable: comforting.

163–173 The Friar hears noise and wants Juliet to get out of the awful tomb. He says that a greater force than they can fight (**contradict**), meaning God or fate, has ruined their plans (**thwarted our intents**). He informs her of Romeo's and Paris' deaths and says he'll find a place for her in a convent of nuns. Why is the Friar so anxious to leave?

175 timeless: happening before its proper time.

176–180 Juliet calls Romeo a miser (**churl**) for not leaving some poison for her. She kisses him, hoping that perhaps (**haply**) some of the poison is still on his lips.

This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.

[*She stabs herself and falls.*]

[*Enter Watchmen with the Page of Paris.*]

185 **Page.** This is the place. There, where the torch doth
burn.

Chief Watchman. The ground is bloody. Search about
the churchyard.

Go, some of you; who'er you find attach.

[*Exeunt some of the Watch.*]

190 Pitiful sight! here lies the County slain;
And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain this two days buried.
Go, tell the Prince; run to the Capulets;
Raise up the Montagues; some others search.

[*Exeunt others of the Watch.*]

195 We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,
But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

[*Reenter some of the Watch, with Balthasar.*]

Second Watchman. Here's Romeo's man. We found
him in the churchyard.

200 **Chief Watchman.** Hold him in safety till the Prince
come hither.

[*Reenter Friar Laurence and another Watchman.*]

Third Watchman. Here is a friar that trembles, sighs,
and weeps.

We took this mattock and this spade from him
As he was coming from this churchyard side.

205 **Chief Watchman.** A great suspicion! Stay the friar too.

[*Enter the Prince and Attendants.*]

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning rest?

[*Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, and others.*]

183 From this point on, the churchyard will be filled with people and lights.

188 attach: arrest.

193 Raise up: awaken.

194–196 We see the earth (**ground**) these bodies lie on. But the real cause (**true ground**) of these deaths is yet for us to discover (**descry**).

199–205 The guards arrest Balthasar and Friar Laurence as suspicious characters.



Capulet. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

210 **Lady Capulet.** The people in the street cry “Romeo,”
Some “Juliet,” and some “Paris”; and all run,
With open outcry, toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this which startles in our ears?

212 startles: causes alarm.

Chief Watchman. Sovereign, here lies the County
Paris slain;
215 And Romeo dead, and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new killed.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul
murder comes.

220 **Chief Watchman.** Here is a friar, and slaughtered
Romeo’s man,
With instruments upon them fit to open
These dead men’s tombs.

Capulet. O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter
bleeds!

225 This dagger hath mista’en, for, lo, his house
Is empty on the back of Montague,
And it missheathed in my daughter’s bosom!

225–227 This dagger has missed its target. It should rest in the sheath (**house**) that Romeo wears. Instead it is in Juliet’s bosom.

Lady Capulet. O me! this sight of death is as a bell
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

[*Enter Montague and others.*]

230 **Prince.** Come, Montague; for thou art early up
To see thy son and heir now early down.

Montague. Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight!
Grief of my son’s exile hath stopped her breath.
What further woe conspires against mine age?

232–234 My son’s exile has caused my wife to die. What other sadness plots against me in my old age?

235 **Prince.** Look, and thou shalt see.

Montague. O thou untaught! what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

236–237 what manners . . . grave: What kind of behavior is this, for a son to die before his father?

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
Till we can clear these ambiguities
240 And know their spring, their head, their true
descent;
And then will I be general of your woes
And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,

238–245 Seal . . . descent: Stop your emotional outbursts until we can find out the source (**spring**) of these confusing events (**ambiguities**). Wait (**forbear**) and let’s find out what happened.



And let mischance be slave to patience.
245 Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Friar Laurence. I am the greatest, able to do least,
Yet most suspected, as the time and place
Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
250 Myself condemned and myself excused.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

Friar Laurence. I will be brief, for my short date
of breath
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
255 Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife.
I married them; and their stol'n marriage day
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death
Banisht the new-made bridegroom from this city;
260 For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.
You, to remove that siege of grief from her,
Betrothed and would have married her perforce
To County Paris. Then comes she to me
And with wild looks bid me devise some mean
265 To rid her from this second marriage,
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.
Then gave I her (so tutored by my art)
A sleeping potion; which so took effect
As I intended, for it wrought on her
270 The form of death. Meantime I writ to Romeo
That he should hither come as this dire night
To help to take her from her borrowed grave,
Being the time the potion's force should cease.
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
275 Was stayed by accident, and yesternight
Returned my letter back. Then all alone
At the prefixed hour of her waking
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;
Meaning to keep her closely at my cell
280 Till I conveniently could send to Romeo.
But when I came, some minute ere the time
Of her awaking, here untimely lay
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.

246–250 Friar Laurence confesses that is most responsible for these events. He will both accuse (**impeach**) himself and clear (**purge**) himself of guilt.

260 It was Romeo's banishment, not Tybalt's death, that made Juliet sad.

272 borrowed: temporary.

285 She wakes; and I entreated her come forth
 And bear this work of heaven with patience;
 But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,
 And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
 But, as it seems, did violence on herself.
 All this I know, and to the marriage
 290 Her nurse is privy; and if aught in this
 Miscarried by my fault, let my old life
 Be sacrificed, some hour before his time,
 Unto the rigor of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy man.
 295 Where's Romeo's man? What can he say in this?

Balthasar. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
 And then in post he came from Mantua
 To this same place, to this same monument.
 This letter he early bid me give his father,
 300 And threatened me with death, going in the vault,
 If I departed not and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter. I will look on it.
 Where is the County's page that raised the watch?
 Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

305 **Page.** He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave;
 And bid me stand aloof, and so I did.
 Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb;
 And by-and-by my master drew on him;
 And then I ran away to call the watch.

310 **Prince.** This letter doth make good the friar's words,
 Their course of love, the tidings of her death;
 And here he writes that he did buy a poison
 Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
 Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.
 315 Where be these enemies? Capulet, Montague,
 See what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
 That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!
 And I, for winking at your discords too,
 Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished.

320 **Capulet.** O brother Montague, give me thy hand.
 This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
 Can I demand.

289–293 and to . . . law: Her nurse can bear witness to the secret marriage. If I am responsible for any of this, let the law punish me with death.

297 in post: at full speed.

303–304 Where . . . this place: The Prince asks for Paris' servant, who notified the guards (**raised the watch**). Then he asks the servant why Paris was at the cemetery.

307–309 Soon (**Anon**), someone with a light came and opened the tomb. Paris drew his sword, and I ran to call the guards.

310 Romeo's letter shows that Friar Laurence has told the truth.

315–319 Where are the enemies whose feud started all this trouble? Capulet and Montague, look at the punishment your hatred has brought on you. Heaven has killed your children (**joys**) with love. For shutting my eyes to your arguments (**discords**), I have lost two relatives (Mercutio and Paris). We all have been punished.

321 jointure: dowry, the payment a bride's father makes to the groom. Capulet means that no one could demand more of a bride's father than he has already paid.

NSJ

Montague. But I can give thee more;
For I will raise her statue in pure gold,
325 That whiles Verona by that name is known,
There shall no figure at such rate be set
As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Capulet. As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie—
Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

330 **Prince.** A glooming peace this morning with it brings.
The sun for sorrow will not show his head.
Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things;
Some shall be pardoned, and some punished;
For never was a story of more woe
335 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

[*Exeunt.*]

324–327 at such rate be set: be valued so highly. What does Montague promise to do for the memory of Juliet?

328–329 Capulet promises to do the same for Romeo as Montague will do for Juliet. Their children have become sacrifices to their hatred (**enmity**).



Act Five, Scene 3. Citizens of Verona gather to mourn Romeo and Juliet. (Zeffirelli, 1968)

Connect to the Literature

1. What Do You Think?

What effect did the multiple deaths in Act Five have on you?

Comprehension Check

- What prevents Friar John from delivering the letter to Romeo?
- Why does Paris attack Romeo at the Capulets' tomb?
- What mistaken belief about Juliet causes Romeo to take his life?

Think Critically

2. The Prologue of Act One speaks of Romeo and Juliet as "a pair of star-crossed lovers." Do you think that fate or individual characters are more responsible for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?

THINK ABOUT

- how likely it is that their love could have overcome their families' hate
- the actions of Juliet's parents, Tybalt, the Prince, the Nurse, Friar Laurence, the apothecary, and Romeo and Juliet themselves
- the extent to which accidents and coincidences contribute to the outcome
- what other choices Romeo and Juliet might have made

3. Does your opinion of Paris change in the final scene? Explain your answer.

4. **ACTIVE READING READING SHAKESPEAREAN DRAMA** The final stage of the plot of a drama is the **resolution**. In Shakespearean drama, the resolution occurs in the last act. Look back at the graphic you have been keeping in your **READER'S NOTEBOOK**. What events contribute to the resolution? Do you think this sequence of events brings the play to a satisfying conclusion? Why or why not?

Extend Interpretations

5. **What If?** If Capulet and Montague had not reconciled, how would the meaning of the play be affected?
6. **Connect to Life** In the lives of individuals as well as of communities and nations, important and necessary changes are often not made until a catastrophe occurs. List some current examples of situations that often are ignored until a crisis looms. What alternatives do you think there are to this way of dealing with problems?

Literary Analysis

TRAGEDY In drama, a **tragedy** is a particular kind of play in which events turn out disastrously for the main character or characters. Usually the tragedy traces the downfall of someone who is otherwise noble except for a character flaw that leads to disaster. Most often, the hero or heroine dies at the end of the play, after facing death with courage and nobility. Fate often plays a role as well in bringing on the final catastrophe.

Cooperative Learning Activity

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- What is the character flaw that leads to catastrophe in the play?
- Who is the play's hero?

REVIEW THEME A **theme** is a central idea or message about life conveyed by a work of literature. Think about how each of the human values and experiences listed in the chart below is conveyed in *Romeo and Juliet*. Then choose four of the topics, and for each one write a statement of how it is expressed as a theme in the play.

Values and Experiences	Statement of Theme
Fate	There are forces in life over which people have no control.
Communication and Its Importance	
Family Ties	
Friendship	
Loyalty	
Impulsive Behavior	
Love	

Writing Options

1. Production Notes Assume that you are going to stage a performance of one scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. After choosing the scene, think about the characters, setting, and action involved. Make notes detailing how you envision each character, what kinds of sets and props you want to use, and how the action sequences should be carried out. Consider the purpose, audience, and occasion. Place your notes in

your **Working Portfolio**.

2. Essay on Imagery Write an essay exploring the imagery in *Romeo and Juliet*, especially the light and dark imagery used in the main characters' speeches.

Writing Handbook

See pages 1157–1158: Analysis.



Activities & Explorations

1. Set Design Choose another time and place as the setting for a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Design sketches for the sets of three or four major scenes. The sketches may be simple drawings or more elaborate finished works, and they may include suggestions for costumes and lighting. ~ ART

2. Falling in Love on Screen Look at the two film versions of *Romeo and Juliet*'s first meeting provided on the video that accompanies this program. What does seeing and hearing the scene add to your understanding of the language and imagery in these lines? Do the characters seem believable? natural? With a partner, compare the two versions.

~ VIEWING AND REPRESENTING



VIDEO Literature in Performance

Inquiry & Research

1. West Side Story With classmates read *West Side Story*, the stage musical based on *Romeo and Juliet*, or view a videocassette of the Oscar-winning 1961 film adaptation. Then, in a group discussion compare and contrast the music with Shakespeare's play. Consider similarities in characters, settings, events, social concerns and other themes, and language. Also consider differences, including the endings.

2. Modern Stagings of a Classic Play One reason for Shakespeare's long-standing popularity is the universal nature of his themes. Research modern stagings of *Romeo and Juliet*. Where have these been performed? Have modern stagings tinkered with the setting, characters, or plot events?



Real World Link Read the news article on page 1106 for information on one special production.

Grammar in Context: Parallelism

In the following passages, Shakespeare uses parallelism to emphasize ideas and to create rhythms.

Friar Laurence. . . . Each part, deprived of
supple government,
Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death;
—Act Four, Scene 1

Parallelism is the repetition of a grammatical feature within a sentence or paragraph. In the example above, parallel elements are shown in colored type.

When you group ideas as in the example above, make sure that the sentence elements are parallel grammatically as well as logically. For example, Friar Laurence's statement would be less effective if Shakespeare had written "stiff and stark and without warmth," mixing a prepositional phrase (*without warmth*) with the two adjectives.

WRITING EXERCISE Rewrite each sentence, making the related elements grammatically parallel.

Usage Tip: Clauses also can serve as parallel elements.

Example: Original Loyalty, trust, and to have respect characterize Romeo and Mercutio's friendship.

Rewritten Loyalty, trust, and respect characterize Romeo and Mercutio's friendship.

1. The play begins with an insult, a fight, and with warning.
2. Romeo arrives at a party, he sees Juliet, and falls in love with her.
3. Friar Laurence is compassionate, kindhearted, and he shows loyalty.
4. Romeo reacts to the news of Juliet's death with shock, distress, and becoming angry.



William Shakespeare

1564–1616

Other Works

Hamlet
Julius Caesar
King Lear
Macbeth

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Much Ado About Nothing
Othello
Richard II
Twelfth Night

Bard of Avon Although William Shakespeare is probably the most famous writer who ever lived, it is largely through his plays and poetry that we know him. The known facts about his personal life are surprisingly few. We know that he came from Stratford-on-Avon, a small town on the River Avon about ninety miles northwest of London. His father was a glove maker who later became the town's mayor; his mother was a distant connection of a wealthy family who lived just outside town. Church records indicate that Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, which suggests that he was born a few days earlier. He probably went to the local grammar school, although school records no longer exist. There he would have studied Latin and read works by ancient Roman writers, including Virgil and Seneca.

Making His Way At eighteen, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, a local farmer's daughter apparently seven or eight years his senior. The couple had a daughter named Susanna in 1583 and boy and girl twins named Hamnet and Judith two years later. There are no records of what Shakespeare did in the next seven years, which some scholars call the "lost years" of his life. During that time he apparently left his family back in Stratford, where they could live comfortably, and made his way to London, center of the theater world. He probably joined a theater company and traveled with them as an actor, most likely making London his home base. When next we hear of Shakespeare, he is a successful playwright and sometime actor in London. His earliest plays include *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*; he also was writing lyric and narrative

poetry. For example, in 1593 he published his long poem *Venus and Adonis*, apparently written during the 1592–1593 season, when London's theaters were shut because of an outbreak of the plague.

A Highly Successful Author By 1596, the year in which *Romeo and Juliet* was probably first performed, ten of Shakespeare's plays had already been produced in London, and Shakespeare was a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men. The theater company had as its patron at that time the high-ranking royal official, known as the Lord Chamberlain. Shakespeare's plays helped make the theater company the most successful of its day. In 1599, he and the other shareholders became part owners of London's popular new Globe Theatre. In 1603, when James I succeeded Elizabeth I to the throne of England, the new king himself became the patron of Shakespeare's theater company, which became known as the King's Men. Shakespeare's business interests and revenues from plays brought him a good deal of money, enough to purchase a beautiful home for his family in Stratford. He was also able to purchase a coat of arms for his father, an important symbol that allowed his father to move officially into the ranks of gentlemen.

Later Years In 1609, Shakespeare took advantage of his fame by publishing his sonnets, a series of poems about love and friendship that most scholars feel he wrote in the 1590s. Shakespeare also began spending more time in Stratford, retiring there permanently in 1613. He wrote no plays after that year; his last complete plays are believed to be *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Henry VIII*. While there are no documentary records of the date of his death, the monument that marks his grave indicates that he died on April 23, 1616.

Author Activity

Quarto and Folio Nicknamed the Bard of Avon (*bard* is a synonym for *poet*), Shakespeare wrote a total of 37 verse dramas. The earliest editions of his plays appear in small quartos and in folios of larger size. Find out more about these two different formats and about the famous First Folio of 1623.

Romeo and Juliet Are Palestinian and Jewish

by Carol Rosenberg

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, a tale of love, hate, and revenge, has proven to be lasting and compelling. Versions of the play have been set in different eras and produced in theaters all over the world. This article describes a 1994 production in Jerusalem that was based on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Most actors would be delighted to have their mothers in the audience as they played Romeo, scaling a moonlit balcony, matching wits with the Capulets.

Not so for Khalifa Natur, who makes his national debut later this week as the misguided young Montague in a politically charged production of Shakespeare's romantic tragedy being staged jointly by two Jerusalem theater troupes.

"It'll be a little bit embarrassing, that's for sure," said Natur, referring in particular to the part when he plants a not-so-chaste kiss on Juliet.

That's because Juliet is a Jew, Tel Aviv actress Orna Katz—and Natur is a Palestinian who grew up in a tiny Israeli-Arab village, Kalanswa.

Katz and Natur, both 29, were scripted as the star-crossed lovers more than a year ago specifically because of their separate identities.

And both have rehearsed in on-again, off-again fashion for more than a year in the landmark production, which portrays the Montagues as Palestinians and the Capulets as Jews by shifting between Hebrew and Arabic dialogue.

Co-directors Eran Daniel (a Jew) and Fouad Awad (a Muslim) say they are largely faithful to the original text, whose translations were written by leading Israeli and Palestinian songwriters.

Three years in the making, it is an ambitious and contentious project of the Israeli Khan Theater in Jewish West Jerusalem and the Palestinian Al-Kasaba Theater in the Holy City's once predominantly Arab east side.

Art has never been above the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some Palestinian artists refused to participate, arguing that Arabs should not collaborate with the occupier, Israel. Some Israeli

Reading for Informat

Do you think cultural events have the power to help resolve deep-seated conflicts? This production is one example of using art to further understanding.

TAKING NOTES

Note taking is a useful skill when collecting and organizing the information that you read. There are three basic note-taking techniques:

- **outlining:** a visual display of the main ideas and supporting details in a text (in formal outlines, Roman numerals are used for main ideas, capital letters for subtopics, and numbers for details)
- **paraphrasing:** restating the main ideas in your own words
- **summarizing:** condensing an article's main ideas into shorter paragraphs, sentences, or phrases

YOUR TURN Use the questions and activities below to help you take notes on this article.

- **Outlining Important Ideas** Use the outline format shown here to take notes on the article. Write down only key points; do not try to copy every word.

1. Palestinian and Israeli production of *Romeo and Juliet*
 - A. Jews and Palestinians shared both acting and production tasks.
 1. Palestinians play Montagues and Jews play Capulets
 2. Co-directed by a Jew and a Muslim