

# 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 Capulets' 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  
That I revived and was an emperor.

10 Ah me! how sweet is love itself possessed,  
When but love's shadows are so rich in joy! **A**

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

News from Verona! How now, Balthasar?  
Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?  
How doth my lady? Is my father well?  
15 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,  
And her immortal part with angels lives.  
20 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.

**Romeo.** Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!  
25 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  
Some misadventure.

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

### **A TRAGEDY**

**Paraphrase** lines 1–11. What part of Romeo's seemingly happy dream **foreshadows** the tragic events to come?

**17–19** Balthasar replies that Juliet is well, since although her body lies in the Capulets' (**Capels'**) burial vault, her soul (**her immortal part**) is with the angels.

**21 presently took post:** immediately rode (to Mantua).

**23 you did . . . office:** you gave me the duty of reporting important news to you.

**24 I . . . stars:** Romeo angrily challenges fate, which has caused him so much grief.

**28–29 import some misadventure:** suggest that something bad will happen.

Romeo and Juliet in the 1994 production of the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C.



**Romeo.** Tush, thou art deceived.

30 Leave me and do the thing I bid thee do.  
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

**Balthasar.** No, my good lord.

**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. **B**

35 Let's see for means. O mischief, thou art swift  
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!

I do remember an apothecary,  
And hereabouts he dwells, which late I noted  
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,

40 Culling of simples. Meager were his looks,  
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones;  
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,  
An alligator stuffed, and other skins  
Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves

45 A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,  
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses  
Were thinly scattered, to make up a show.  
Noting this penury, to myself I said,

50 "An if a man did need a poison now  
Whose sale is present death in Mantua,  
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.

55 As I remember, this should be the house.  
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.  
What, ho! apothecary!

[Enter Apothecary.]

**Apothecary.** Who calls so loud?

**Romeo.** Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.  
Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have

60 A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear  
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

65 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

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

## **B CHARACTER**

What does Romeo mean in line 34?  
Explain whether he thoughtfully  
considers his options or plunges  
immediately into action.

**35–40 Let's . . . means:** Let me find a  
way (to join Juliet in death); **apothecary:**  
pharmacist; **tattered weeds:** ragged  
clothes; **culling of simples:** selecting  
herbs.

**47 cakes of roses:** rose petals pressed  
together to create a perfume.

**49 penury:** poverty.

**50–52 "An if a man . . . sell it him":**  
Though it is a crime to sell poison  
in Mantua, the apothecary is such a  
miserable (**caitiff**) wretch that he would  
probably do it for the money.

**59 ducats:** gold coins.

**60–65** Romeo wants fast-acting (**soon-  
speeding**) poison that will work as  
quickly as gunpowder exploding in  
a cannon.

**67 any . . . them:** any person who  
dispenses or sells them.



**Romeo.** Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness  
And fearest to die? Famine is in thy cheeks,  
70 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.

75 **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.

80 **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.  
I sell thee poison; thou hast sold me none.  
Farewell. Buy food and get thyself in flesh.  
85 Come, cordial and not poison, go with me  
To Juliet's grave; for there must I use thee.  
[*Exeunt.*]

**72–74** Romeo urges the apothecary to improve his situation by breaking the law and selling him the poison.

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

**79** *dispatch you straight*: kill you instantly.

**85** Romeo refers to the poison as a **cordial**, a drink believed to be good for the heart. *Why does he refer to it in this way?*

## 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.*

[*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?  
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

5 **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,  
Suspecting that we both were in a house  
10 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.

**5–12** Friar John explains why he did not go to Mantua. He had asked another friar (**barefoot brother**), 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 a deadly plague (**infectious pestilence**), locked them up to keep them from infecting others.

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

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

15 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,  
Of dear import, and the neglecting it  
20 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.*]

**Friar Laurence.** Now must I to the monument alone.  
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.

25 She will beshrew me much that Romeo  
Hath had no notice of these accidents;  
But I will write again to Mantua,  
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come—  
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb! **C**  
[*Exit.*]

**13 bare:** carried (bore).

**18–20** The letter wasn't trivial (**nice**) but contained a message of great importance (**dear import**). The fact that it wasn't sent (**neglecting it**) may cause great harm.

**21 iron crow:** crowbar.

**25–26 She ... accidents:** She will be furious with me when she learns that Romeo doesn't know what has happened.

### **C SOLILOQUY**

Explain what you learn about the friar's new plan in this soliloquy. Why is it essential that the friar reach Juliet before Romeo does?

## **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. Paris assumes that Romeo is going to harm the bodies. He challenges Romeo, 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 of grief because of Romeo's exile. Friar Laurence explains 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.

**1 aloof:** some distance away.

## Behind the Curtain

The Royal Shakespeare Company's 2004 production



The Shakespeare Israeli Company's 1994 production



## Lighting

Directors use a variety of techniques to make a play's **lighting** effective. For example, spotlights can illuminate one character while leaving others in semi-darkness, and effects such as candles or prominent shadows can help create specific moods. What is distinctive about the lighting in each of these shots? Explain the effect each technique produces.

The Royal Opera House's 2000 Covent Garden production



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*]

**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. **D**

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

**20 cross:** interfere with.

**21 muffle:** hide.

**mattock . . . iron:** an ax and a crowbar.

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

**33 jealous:** curious.

**37–39** Romeo's intention is more unstoppable (**inexorable**) than hungry (**empty**) tigers or the waves of an ocean.

## **D TRAGEDY**

Reread lines 25–39 and think about how tragedies usually end for the main characters. Paraphrase the two reasons Romeo gives for going into the tomb. What third reason does he hint at?



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.

**Balthasar** [*aside*]. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.  
His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

[*withdraws*]

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

[*Romeo opens the tomb.*]

**Paris.** This is that banish'd haughty Montague  
50 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  
To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.  
Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!

55 Can vengeance be pursued further than death?  
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee.  
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

**Romeo.** I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.  
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man.

60 Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone;  
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,  
Put not another sin upon my head  
By urging me to fury. O, be gone!  
By heaven, I love thee better than myself.

65 For I come hither armed against myself.  
Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say  
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

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

70 **Romeo.** Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy! **E**  
[*They fight.*]

43 Who else besides Balthasar is hiding in the cemetery at this point?

45–49 Romeo addresses the tomb as though it were devouring people. He calls it a hateful stomach (**detestable maw**) that is filled (**gorged**) with Juliet, the **dearest morsel of the earth**. He uses his crowbar to open its **rotten jaws** and moves to enter the tomb.

49–53 Recognizing Romeo, Paris speaks these first few lines to himself. He is angry with Romeo, believing that Romeo's killing Tybalt caused Juliet to die of grief.

58–67 Romeo rejects Paris' challenge. He tells Paris to think of those already killed and to leave before Romeo is forced to kill him too. Romeo swears that he has come to harm himself, not Paris.

68 I reject your appeal.

### **E CHARACTER**

Consider what you know about Romeo's **traits** and **flaws**. Is Romeo at fault for fighting Paris? Why or why not?



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

[*Exit.*]

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

[*dies*]

**Romeo.** In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.

75 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!  
What said my man when my betossed soul  
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?

80 Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,  
To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,  
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,  
85 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes  
This vault a feasting presence full of light.  
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

90 A lightning before death. O, how may I  
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!  
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

95 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.  
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

100 To sunder his that was thine enemy?

Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,  
Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe  
That unsubstantial Death is amorous,  
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps

105 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?  
For fear of that I still will stay with thee  
And never from this palace of dim night

**74–78** Romeo discovers that the man he has just killed is Paris, who he vaguely remembers being told was supposed to marry Juliet.

**82** Romeo notes that, like himself, Paris has been a victim of bad luck.

**84–87** Romeo will bury Paris 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.

**94** **ensign:** sign.

**98–100** **O, what . . . enemy:** I can best repay you (Tybalt) by killing your enemy (myself) with the same hand that cut your youth in two (**twain**).

**102–105** Romeo can't get over how beautiful Juliet still looks. He asks whether Death is loving (**amorous**) and whether it has taken Juliet as its lover (**paramour**).

- Depart again. Here, here will I remain  
 With worms that are thy chambermaids. O, here
- 110 Will I set up my everlasting rest  
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars  
 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
- 115 A dateless bargain to engrossing death!  
 Come, bitter conduct; come, unsavory guide!  
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on  
 The dashing rocks thy seasick weary bark!  
 Here's to my love! [*drinks*] O true apothecary!
- 120 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 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 my friend,
- 125 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,  
 One that you love.
- Friar Laurence.** Who is it?
- Balthasar.** Romeo.
- 130 **Friar Laurence.** How long hath he been there?
- Balthasar.** Full half an hour.
- 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.
- 135 **Friar Laurence.** Stay then; I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me.  
 O, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

**111–112 shake . . . flesh:** rid myself of the burden of an unhappy fate (**inauspicious stars**). *On what does Romeo blame his imminent death?*

**115 dateless:** eternal; never-ending. Romeo means that what he is about to do can never be undone.

**117–118** 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.

### Language Coach

**Oral Fluency** In line 125, *yond* is short for *yonder*, meaning “over there.” Why is *yond* better than *yonder* in this line?

**132–134 My master . . . intents:** My master told me to go away and threatened me with death if I watched what he did.

**136 unthrifty:** unlucky.

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

**Friar Laurence.** Romeo!

*[stoops and looks on the blood and weapons]*

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

*[enters the tomb]*

Romeo! O, pale! Who else? What, Paris too?

145 And steeped in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour  
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!  
The lady stirs.

*[Juliet rises.]*

**Juliet.** O comfortable friar! where is my lord?

I do remember well where I should be,

150 And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

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

**140–143 Alack . . . place of peace?** 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.)

**148 comfortable:** comforting.



Romeo and Juliet in the Upper School Theatre's 1999 production

Romeo and Juliet in the 2004  
production of the Globe Theatre



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

160 **Juliet.** Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.  
 [*Exit Friar Laurence.*]  
 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.  
 165 Haply some poison yet doth hang on them  
 To make me die with a restorative.  
 [*kisses him*]  
 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*]

170 This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.  
 [*She stabs herself and falls.*]  
 [*Enter Watchmen with the Page of Paris.*]  
**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; whoe'er you find attach.  
 [*Exeunt some of the Watch.*]  
 Pitiful sight! here lies the County slain;  
 175 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.*]  
 We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,  
 180 But the true ground of all these piteous woes  
 We cannot without circumstance descry.  
 [*Reenter some of the Watch, with Balthasar.*]

**153–154 A greater . . . intents:** A greater force than we can fight (**contradict**) has ruined our plans (**thwarted our intents**).

**156–157 I'll dispose . . . nuns:** I'll find a place for you in a convent of nuns.

**158–159 Why is the friar so anxious to leave?**

**162 timeless:** happening before its proper time.

**163 churl:** miser.

**165 haply:** perhaps.

**173 attach:** arrest.

**178 raise up:** awaken.

**179–181 We see . . . descry:** 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**).

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

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

**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.*]

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

**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?

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

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

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

**Capulet.** O heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!  
This dagger hath mista'en, for, lo, his house  
Is empty on the back of Montague,  
205 And it misshathed in my daughter'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.*]

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

210 **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?

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

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

**182–187** The guards arrest Balthasar and Friar Laurence as suspicious characters.

**194 startles:** causes alarm.

**203–205 This dagger . . . in my daughter's bosom:** This dagger has missed its target. It should rest in the sheath (**house**) that Romeo wears. Instead it is in Juliet's chest.

**210 liege:** lord.

**214–215 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  
 And know their spring, their head, their true descent;  
 And then will I be general of your woes  
 220 And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear,  
 And let mischance be slave to patience.  
 Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

**Friar Laurence.** I am the greatest, able to do least,  
 Yet most suspected, as the time and place  
 225 Doth make against me, of this direful murder;  
 And here I stand, both to impeach and purge  
 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  
 230 Is not so long as is a tedious tale.  
 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  
 235 Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city;  
 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  
 240 And with wild looks bid me devise some mean  
 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  
 245 As I intended, for it wrought on her  
 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.  
 250 But he which bore my letter, Friar John,  
 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;  
 255 Meaning to keep her closely at my cell  
 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.  
 260 She wakes; and I entreated her come forth

**216–221 Seal . . . patience:** Stop your emotional outbursts until we can find out the source (**spring**) of these confusing events (**ambiguities**). Wait (**forbear**) and be patient, and let's find out what happened.

**223–227** Friar Laurence confesses that he is most responsible for these events. He will both accuse (**impeach**) himself and clear (**purge**) himself of guilt.

#### COMMON CORE L 4

### Language Coach

**Multiple Meanings** The word *date* means something other than “day of the month” in line 229; it means “the length of time something lasts.” What does Friar Laurence mean by “my short date of breath”?

**236** It was Romeo's banishment, not Tybalt's death, that made Juliet so sad.

**248 borrowed:** temporary.

**254 kindred's:** family's.



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.

265 All this I know, and to the marriage  
 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.

270 **Prince.** We still have known thee for a holy man.  
 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.

275 This letter he early bid me give his father,  
 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?

280 Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

**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;

285 And then I ran away to call the watch.

**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

290 Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.  
 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,

295 Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All are punished. **F**

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

**265–269 and to . . . law:** Her nurse can bear witness to this secret marriage. If I am responsible for any of this, let the law punish me with death.

**270** *How does the Prince respond to the friar's acceptance of blame?*

**273 in post:** at full speed.

**279–280** The Prince asks for Paris' servant, who notified the guards (**raised the watch**). Then he asks the servant why Paris was at the cemetery.

**283–285 Anon . . . call the watch:** Soon (**anon**) someone with a light came and opened the tomb. Paris drew his sword, and I ran to call the guards.

**292–295 See what . . . punished:** 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. We have all been punished.

## **F TRAGEDY**

Reread lines 291–295. On what does the prince blame all the deaths? What **theme**, or message, might this passage suggest?

**297–298 jointure:** dowry, the payment a bride's father traditionally made to the groom. Capulet means that no one could demand more of a bride's father than he has already paid.

**Montague.** But I can give thee more;  
For I will raise her statue in pure gold,  
300 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!

305 **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  
310 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

[*Exeunt.*]

**301 at such rate be set:** be valued so highly.

**303–304** Capulet promises to do for Romeo what Montague will do for Juliet. Their children have become sacrifices to their hatred (**enmity**).



The Capulets and Lord Montague mourn their children's deaths in an Austin, Texas, high school production.

## Comprehension

- Recall** What prevents Friar John from delivering the letter to Romeo?
- Recall** Why does Paris attack Romeo at the Capulets' tomb?
- Summarize** How do the bodies of Paris, Romeo, and Juliet all end up in the Capulets' tomb? Explain how each character loses his or her life.



**RL 2** Determine a theme of a text. **RL 3** Analyze how complex characters advance the plot or develop the theme. **RL 10** Read and comprehend dramas.

## Text Analysis

- Reading Shakespearean Drama** In Shakespearean drama, the **resolution**, or final plot stage, occurs in the last act. Look back at the chart you completed as you read. Describe the events that make up the resolution of this tragedy. Do you think this sequence of events brings the play to a satisfying conclusion? Explain.
- Make Judgments** In the play's final speech, Prince Escalus declares, "Some shall be pardoned, and some punished." If you were the ruler of Verona, whom would you pardon, and whom would you punish? Explain.
- Identify Soliloquy** Identify a soliloquy in Act Five. Citing specific lines of the play, explain what you learn about the character who is speaking.
- Analyze Tragedy** In a tragedy, the hero or heroine usually has a character flaw that leads to his or her downfall. Is this true of Romeo and Juliet? Cite evidence from the tragedy to support your explanation.
- Examine Theme** Many of the themes in *Romeo and Juliet* are universal, meaning they are still relevant today. Examine the values and experiences shown, and think about how each is presented in *Romeo and Juliet*. Complete the chart by stating how each topic is conveyed as a theme in the play.

<i>Value or Experience</i>	<i>Statement of Theme</i>
<i>Fate</i>	<i>There are forces in life over which people have no control.</i>
<i>Family ties</i>	
<i>Friendship</i>	
<i>Love</i>	

## Text Criticism

- Critical Interpretations** About *Romeo and Juliet*, the critic F. M. Dickey maintains, "love overshadows [hate] dramatically, since it is the passion of the protagonists and since Shakespeare has lavished his most moving poetry upon the love scenes." Do you agree? Support your conclusion with evidence.

### Is LOVE stronger than HATE?

What consequences can arise from hating someone?



## Language

### ◆ GRAMMAR AND STYLE: Create Rhythm

Review the **Grammar and Style** note on page 1066. **Parallelism** is the repetition of grammatical structures—phrases or clauses, for example. Shakespeare’s use of parallelism creates **cadence**, or a balanced, rhythmic flow. Here are two examples from the play. The first contains a series of four past-tense verbs, each followed by the word *for*. In the second, Shakespeare uses the three parallel adjectives *stiff*, *stark*, and *cold*. Think about how these passages might sound without the parallelism.

**First Servingman.** You are *looked for* and *called for*, *asked for* and *sought for*, in the great chamber. (Act One, Scene 5, lines 10–11)

**Friar Laurence.** . . . Each part, deprived of supple government, Shall, *stiff* and *stark* and *cold*, appear like death; (Act Four, Scene 1, lines 102–103)

Now consider how the revision in blue makes use of parallelism to improve the rhythm of this first draft. Revise your response to the prompt below by using parallelism whenever possible.

#### STUDENT MODEL

Goodbye my love, I am going to die.  
*Farewell my love*  
~~Take care my dear, I leave you forever.~~

### READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Increase your understanding of *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* by responding to this prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

#### WRITING PROMPT

##### Short Constructed Response: Blank Verse Poem

What if Romeo had taken slower-acting poison? Imagine that Juliet wakes before the poison kills Romeo, so that he is able to utter his last words of love to her. Write **six to eight lines of a short blank verse poem** in which Romeo says goodbye to Juliet before dying.

#### REVISING TIP

Review your poem. Does your poem have a balanced, rhythmic flow? If not, consider using parallelism to create cadence.

#### COMMON CORE

**L 1a–b** Use parallel structure and various types of phrases and clauses.

Interactive  
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