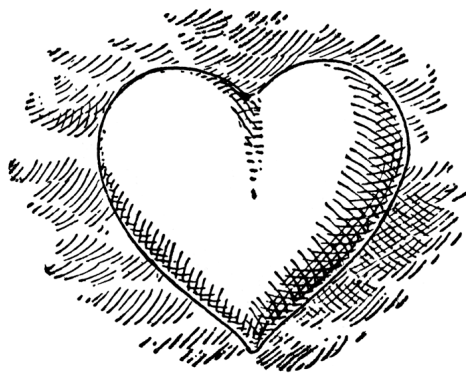


ROMEO AND JULIET

By

William Shakespeare

Act 1, Scene 2



SCENE. A street.

(Enter CAPULET, PARIS, and Servant)

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.
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

CAPULET

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

PARIS

Younger than she are happy mothers made.

CAPULET

And too soon marr'd are those so early made.
The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
She is the hopeful lady of my earth:
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
My will to her consent is but a part;
An she agree, within her scope of choice
Lies my consent and fair according voice.
This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
Whereto I have invited many a guest,
Such as I love; and you, among the store,

One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
At my poor house look to behold this night
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light:
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel
When well-apparell'd April on the heel
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
Among fresh female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house; hear all, all see,
And like her most whose merit most shall be:
Which on more view, of many mine being one
May stand in number, though in reckoning none,
Come, go with me.

(To Servant, giving 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.

(Exeunt CAPULET and PARIS)

Servant

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

(Enter BENVOLIO and ROMEO)

BENVOLIO

Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,

One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

ROMEO
Your plaintain-leaf is excellent for that.

BENVOLIO
For what, I pray thee?

ROMEO
For your broken shin.

BENVOLIO
Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

ROMEO
Not mad, but bound more than a mad-man is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipp'd and tormented and—God-den, good fellow.

Servant
God gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO
Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

Servant
Perhaps you have learned it without book: but, I
pray, can you read any thing you see?

ROMEO
Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

Servant

Ye say honestly: rest you merry!

ROMEO

Stay, fellow; I can read.

(Reads)

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

Servant

Up.

ROMEO

Whither?

Servant

To supper; to our house.

ROMEO

Whose house?

Servant

My master's.

ROMEO

Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

Servant

Now I'll tell you without asking: my master is the
great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house
of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine.
Rest you merry!

(Exit)

BENVOLIO

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

ROMEO

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

BENVOLIO

Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself poised with herself in either eye:
But in that crystal scales let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will show you shining at this feast,
And she shall scant show well that now shows best.

ROMEO

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

(Exeunt)