

-1-

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**O**ne of old Capulet's servants approached Romeo and Benvolio. Unaware that they were Montagues, the servant asked them to help him read the names of people whom Capulet wanted to invite to a party that night. After the servant left, Benvolio got an idea.



FAIR ROSALINE, WHOM THOU SO LOVEST, SUPS THERE. COMPARE HER FACE WITH SOME THAT I SHALL SHOW, AND I WILL MAKE THEE THINK THY SWAN A CROW.

I'LL GO ALONG, NO SUCH SIGHT TO BE SHOWN, BUT TO REJOICE IN SPLENDOR OF MINE OWN.

-3-

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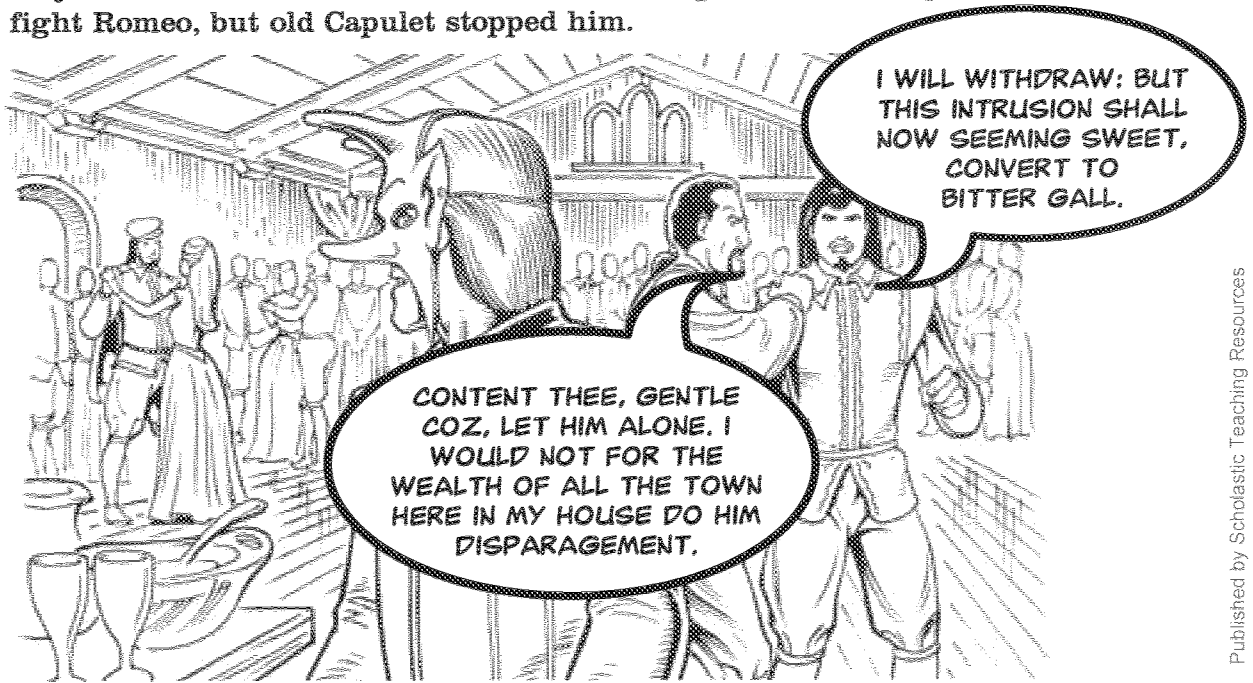
**R**omeo, the only son of old Montague, walked the streets of Verona, Italy, unaware that the prince had just broken up yet another fight between his family and the Capulets. Romeo's mind was not on the ancient family feud, but on Rosaline, a girl who did not return his love. Benvolio tried to cheer up his friend.



**R**omeo, Benvolio, and Romeo's best friend, Mercutio, stood outside Capulet's house before the party. They wore masks to hide their faces. Romeo wondered if it was a good idea to go into his family's enemy's house like this.



**T**he first person Romeo noticed at the party was Capulet's beautiful daughter, Juliet. He did not know who she was, only that "he ne'er saw true beauty till this night." When Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, heard Romeo, he recognized a Montague's voice. He wanted to fight Romeo, but old Capulet stopped him.



-5-

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**L**ater, Juliet asked the nurse who the man was with whom she had been speaking. Her nurse did not know, and went to ask someone. When she returned, she told Juliet that his name was Romeo, and that he was a Montague, "the only son of your great enemy."

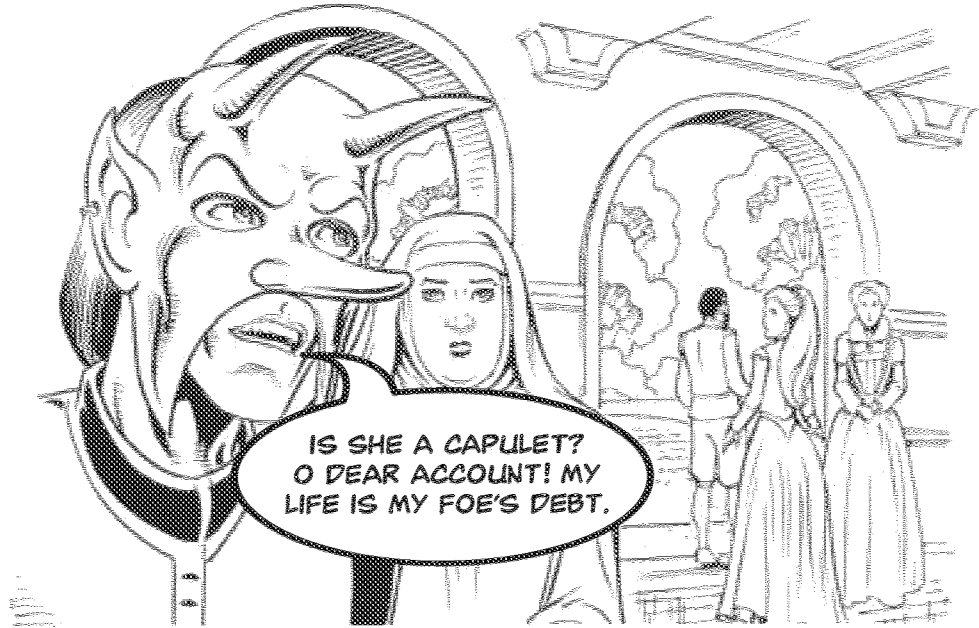


-7-

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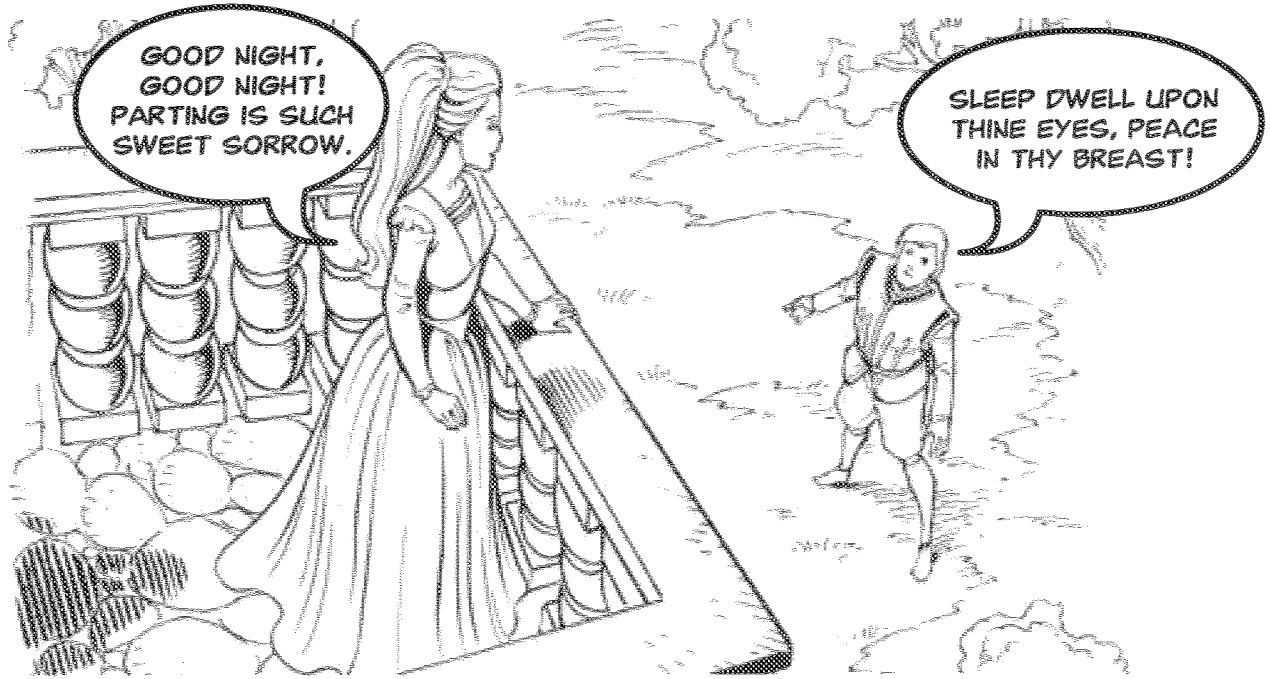
**R**omeo approached Juliet and they spoke. Romeo kissed her hand, then her lips. They were together only a few moments when the nurse came and told Juliet that her mother wanted to speak with her. As Juliet walked away, Romeo asked the nurse who Juliet was. She told him that she was Capulet's only daughter.



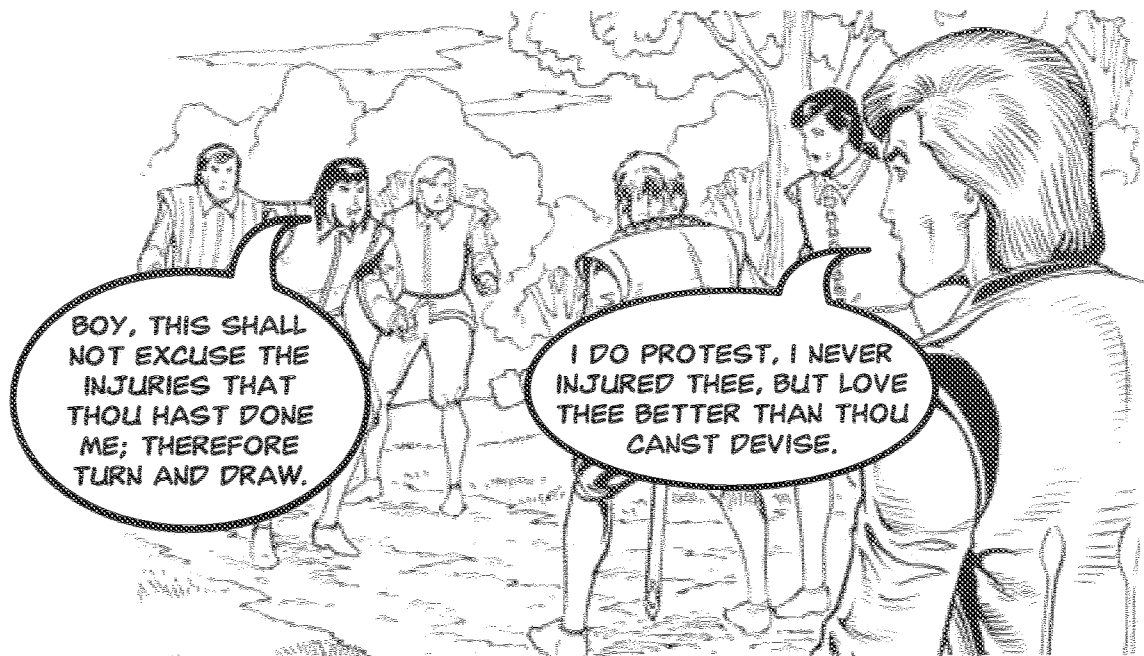
**R**omeo left the party, but could not go home when his heart was filled with Juliet. He turned back and leapt over an orchard wall to be near where she lived. Moments later, Juliet appeared on the balcony. Unaware that Romeo stood below in her garden, she began speaking.



**R**omeo stepped from the shadows and answered Juliet's vows of love with his own. Juliet told Romeo that if his purpose was marriage, to send word to her tomorrow, and she would come to him. Then the nurse called for Juliet to come inside.



**J**uliet left the monastery and went home to wait for Romeo that night. On his way home, Romeo came upon Mercutio and Benvolio arguing with Tybalt. The young Capulet, still angry about the previous night, called Romeo a villain. Romeo, remembering that Tybalt was Juliet's cousin, refused to return the insult.



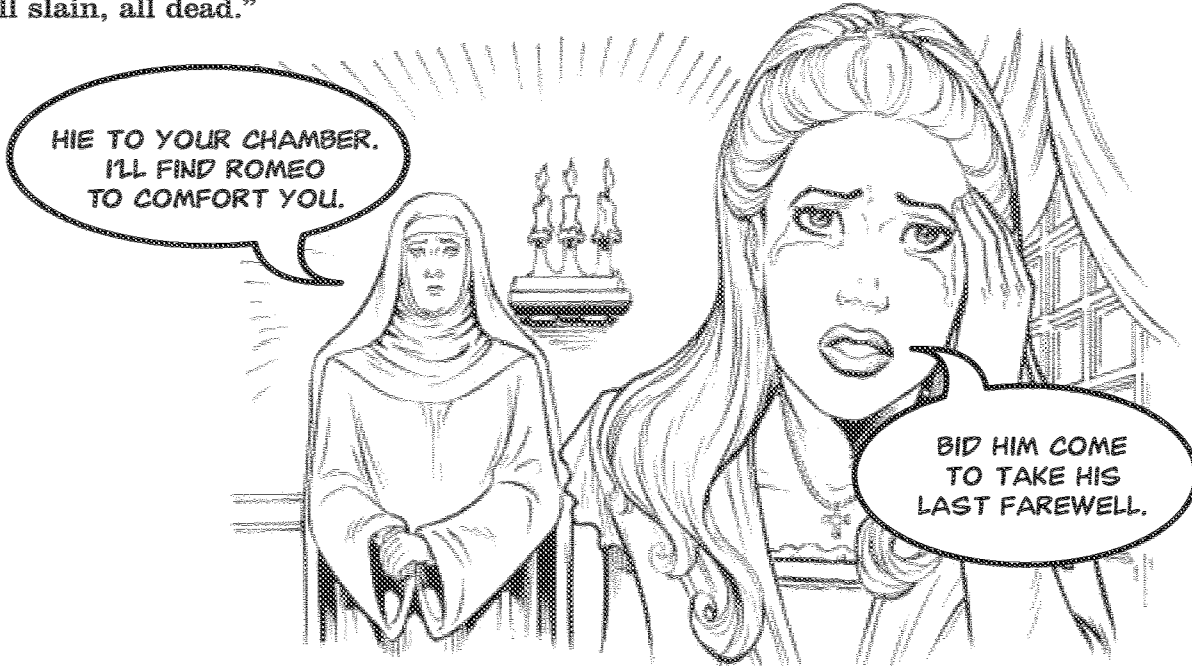
**R**omeo went to speak to Friar Laurence. He agreed to marry them, hoping that their union would end the ancient family feud. Romeo sent word to Juliet, and she met him at the monastery the following afternoon. There they were secretly married.



**M**ercutio, angry at Tybalt's insult, drew his sword and challenged the young Capulet. Tybalt quickly drew his sword and killed Mercutio. In anger and grief over his best friend's death, Romeo forgot his efforts at peacemaking, drew his sword, and killed Tybalt.



**W**hen Juliet learned that Tybalt was dead and that the prince had banished Romeo for her cousin's murder, she was overcome with grief. Tybalt's death was woe enough, but Romeo's banishment was like "father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet, all slain, all dead."



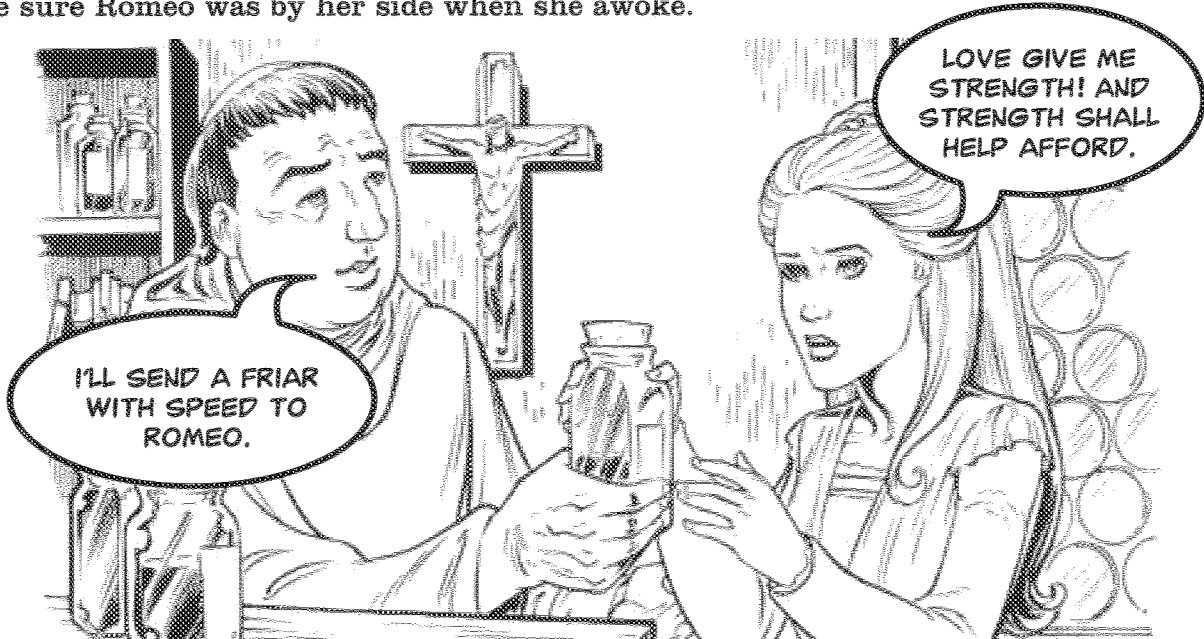
**R**omeo went to Juliet. Before dawn, he fled for Mantua. When Juliet's mother and father found her crying, they thought she was grieving over her cousin's death. They arranged for her immediate marriage to the young nobleman Paris. When Juliet said she could not marry him, her parents threatened to disown her.



**R**omeo hid in the abbey, desperate at the thought of being banished and never seeing Juliet again. The nurse arrived and told him that Juliet needed to see him. Friar Laurence advised Romeo to go to her, but to leave Verona before daybreak. He told him to hide in Mantua, where he would send word when it was safe to return.

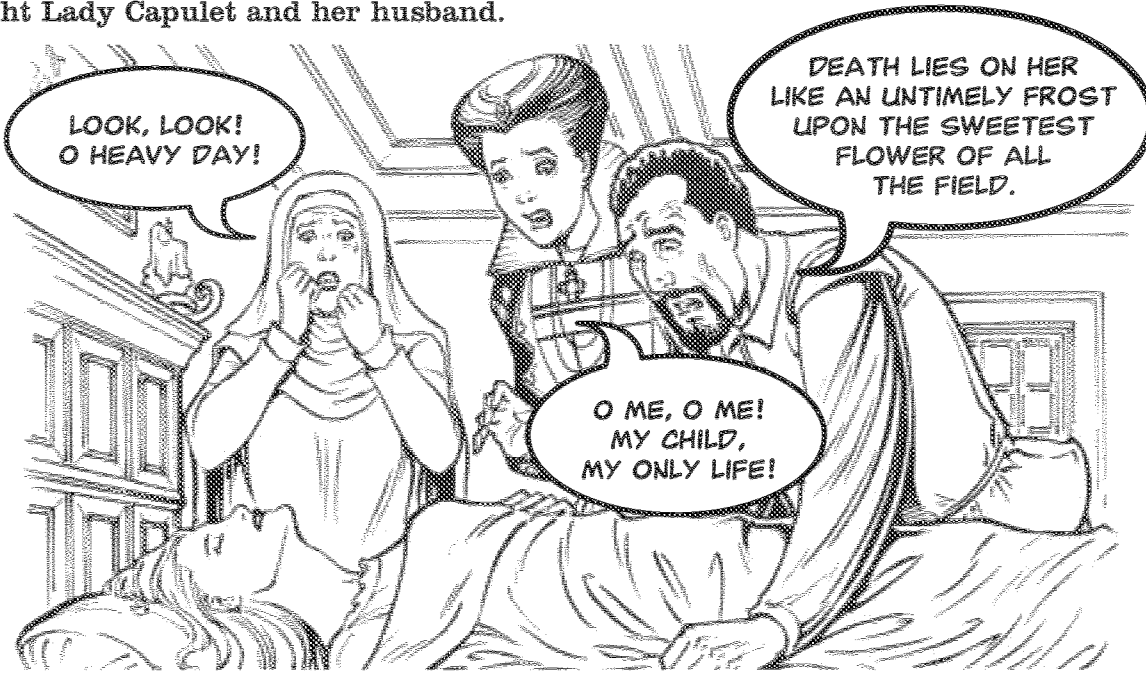


**J**uliet ran to Friar Laurence for help, declaring she would kill herself before she would marry Paris. That gave the friar an idea. He told Juliet to agree to be married. On the night before the wedding, she should drink a potion that would put her in a death sleep for 42 hours. She would be laid to rest in the family tomb. The friar would make sure Romeo was by her side when she awoke.





**J**uliet went home and asked her parents for forgiveness. She then agreed to marry Paris the next day. That night, Juliet drank the friar's potion. When the nurse went to wake Juliet the next morning, she found her seemingly dead. The nurse's cries brought Lady Capulet and her husband.



-17-

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**R**omeo found Juliet lying cold in the tomb. He drank the poison, gave her one last kiss, and died. Upon waking, Juliet found Romeo by her side, dead. She saw the empty poison cup. Then her eyes fell on Romeo's dagger. She picked it up and pointed it towards her chest.



-19-

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**F**riar Laurence had written Romeo of the secret plan, asking him to hurry back to Verona. But the letter never reached him. When Romeo heard of Juliet's death, he bought a dram of poison. On horseback, he hurried back to Verona to the vault where Juliet lay.



**W**hen Romeo and Juliet were found dead, the friar told all what had happened. The prince scolded Capulet and Montague, saying their hate had caused heaven "to kill your joys with love." The two former enemies made peace and promised to erect golden statues of each other's child. Then the prince closed the vault.

