

Now will he sit under a medlar tree
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit
As maids call medlars⁸ when they laugh alone.
O, Romeo, that she were, O that she were
An open *et cetera*, thou a pop'rin pear!
Romeo, good night. I'll to my truckle bed;⁹
This field bed is too cold for me to sleep.
Come, shall we go?

BENVOLIO.

Go then, for 'tis in vain
To seek him here that means not to be found.

[Exit with others.]

Scene ii. CAPULET'S orchard.

ROMEO. [Coming forward] He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

[Enters JULIET at a window.]

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief
That thou her maid art far more fair than she.
Be not her maid, since she is envious.
Her vestal livery¹ is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.
It is my lady! O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were!
She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks.
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres² till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See how she leans her cheek upon that hand,
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET.

Ay me!

ROMEO.

She speaks.

O, speak again, bright angel, for thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a wingèd messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturnèd wond'ring eyes

8. **medlars** applelike fruits.

9. **truckle bed** trundlebed, placed under a larger bed when not in use.

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse What effect does Shakespeare achieve by breaking up a rhymed couplet—a pair of rhyming lines—into two separate scenes?

1. **livery** clothing or costume worn by a servant.

2. **spheres** orbits.

Reading Strategy

Reading Blank Verse

Why does reading Romeo's speech in complete sentences instead of line by line help you grasp its meaning?

Reading Check

Whom does Romeo see at the window?

- 30 Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him
When he bestrides the lazy puffing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.
- JULIET.** O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?³
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
35 Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
- ROMEO.** [Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?
- JULIET.** Tis but thy name that is my enemy.
Thou art thyself, though not⁴ a Montague.
40 What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.
45 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes⁵
Without that title. Romeo, doff⁶ thy name;
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,
Take all myself.
- ROMEO.** I take thee at thy word.
50 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.
- JULIET.** What man art thou, thus bescreened in night,
So stumblest on my counsel?⁷
- ROMEO.** By a name
I know not how to tell thee who I am.
55 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself
Because it is an enemy to thee.
Had I it written, I would tear the word.
- JULIET.** My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.
60 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?
- ROMEO.** Neither, fair maid, if either thee dislike.
- JULIET.** How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
65 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.
- ROMEO.** With love's light wings did I o'erperch⁸ these walls;
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do, that dares love attempt.
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.
- 70 **JULIET.** If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

3. Wherefore . . .
Romeo? Why are you
Romeo—a Montague?

4. though not even if
you were not.

5. owes owns; pos-
sesses.

6. doff remove.

7. counsel secret
thoughts.

Literary Analysis
Blank Verse As in some
other lines in this scene,
the five beats of line 53
are split between two
speakers. How is this
suited to the fact that the
two speakers are in love?

8. o'erperch fly over.

ROMEO. Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords! Look thou but sweet,
And I am proof⁹ against their enmity.

JULIET. I would not for the world they saw thee here.

75 ROMEO. I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes;
And but¹⁰ thou love me, let them find me here.
My life were better ended by their hate
Than death proroguèd,¹¹ wanting of thy love.

JULIET. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

80 ROMEO. By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,
I should adventure¹² for such merchandise.

85 JULIET. Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face;
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.
Fain would I dwell on form¹³—fain, fain deny
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!¹⁴
90 Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay";
And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,
They say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.
95 Or if thou thinkest I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse¹⁵ and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,¹⁶
And therefore thou mayst think my havior light;¹⁷
100 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.¹⁸
I should have been more strange, I must confess.
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,
My truelove passion. Therefore pardon me,
105 And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.¹⁹

ROMEO. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

110 JULIET. O, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circle orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO. What shall I swear by?

JULIET. Do not swear at all;
Or if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse In line 72, what is the effect of the stressed syllable *swords*? Explain.

9. **proof** protected, as by armor.

10. **And but** unless.

11. **proroguèd** postponed.

12. **adventure** risk a long journey, like a sea adventurer.

13. **Fain . . . form** eagerly would I follow convention (by acting reserved).

14. **compliment** conventional behavior.

15. **be perverse** act contrary to my true feelings.

16. **fond** affectionate.

17. **my havior light** my behavior immodest or unserious.

cunning (kun' in) *n.* cleverness; slyness

18. **strange** distant and cold.

19. **discovered** revealed.

✓ Reading Check

Why does Romeo say his name is hateful to him?

Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

115 **ROMEO.** If my heart's dear love—

JULIET. Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract²⁰ tonight.
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
120 Ere one can say it lightens. Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flow'r when next we meet.
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

125 **ROMEO.** O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET. What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

ROMEO. Th' exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it;
And yet I would it were to give again.

130 **ROMEO.** Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

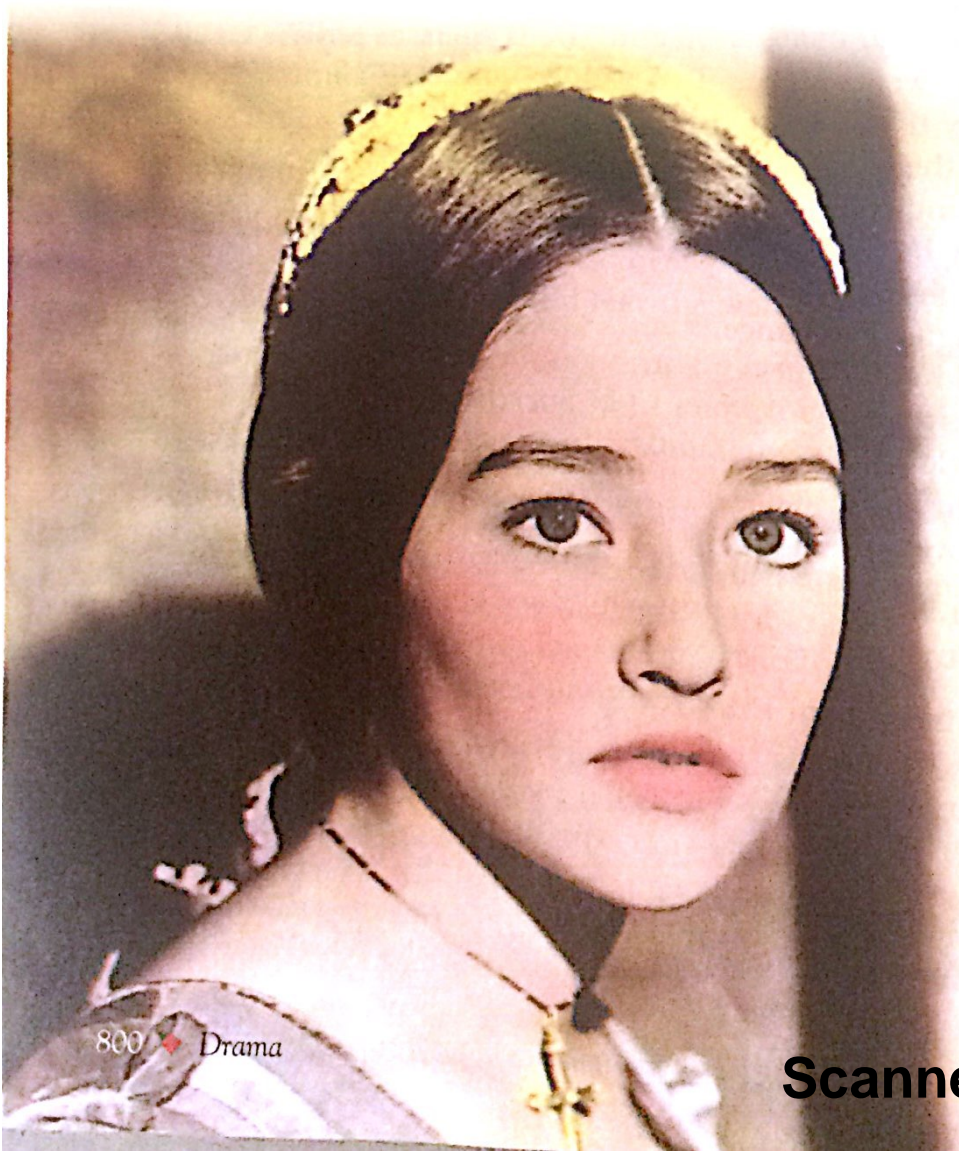
JULIET. But to be frank²¹ and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have.
My bounty²² is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

20. contract betrothal.

Reading Strategy
Reading Blank Verse
How would you rephrase
in Standard English what
Romeo and Juliet are say-
ing to each other?

21. frank generous.

22. bounty what I have
to give.



◀ **Critical Viewing**
How does Juliet's
expression in this picture
match the feelings she has
conveyed in the play so
far? [Connect]

135 The more I have, for both are infinite,
I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!

[NURSE calls within.]

Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again.

[Exit.]

140 ROMEO. O blessèd, blessèd night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.²³

[Enter JULIET again.]

JULIET. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
If that thy bent²⁴ of love be honorable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,
145 By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

NURSE. [Within] Madam!

150 JULIET. I come anon.—But if thou meanest not well,
I do beseech thee—

NURSE. [Within] Madam!

JULIET. By and by²⁵ I come.—
To cease thy strife²⁶ and leave me to my grief.
Tomorrow will I send.

ROMEO. So thrive my soul—

JULIET. A thousand times good night!

[Exit.]

155 ROMEO. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light!
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books;
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

[Enter JULIET again.]

JULIET. Hist! Romeo, hist! O for a falc'ner's voice
To lure this tassel gentle²⁷ back again!
160 Bondage is hoarse²⁸ and may not speak aloud,
Else would I tear the cave where Echo²⁹ lies
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
With repetition of "My Romeo!"

ROMEO. It is my soul that calls upon my name.
165 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET. Romeo!

ROMEO. My sweet?

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse Analyze lines 135–136. Do they meet the criteria of blank verse? Explain.

23. **substantial** real.

24. **bent** purpose; intention.

procure (prō kyoor') v. get

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse Two speakers share the rhythm of line 151. Does the Nurse's interruption complete or break the blank verse?

25. **By and by** at once.

26. **strife** efforts.

27. **tassel gentle** male falcon.

28. **Bondage is hoarse** Being bound in by my family restricts my speech.

29. **Echo** In classical mythology, the nymph Echo, unable to win the love of Narcissus, wasted away in a cave until nothing was left of her but her voice.

✓ Reading Check

What plan do Romeo and Juliet make for the following day?

JULIET.

What o'clock tomorrow

Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO.

By the hour of nine.

JULIET. I will not fail. 'Tis twenty year till then.

170 I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JULIET. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

ROMEO. And I'll stay, to have thee still forget,

175 Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET. 'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone—

And yet no farther than a wanton's³⁰ bird,

That lets it hop a little from his hand,

Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,³¹

180 And with a silken thread plucks it back again,

So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO. I would I were thy bird.

JULIET.

Sweet, so would I.

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow

185 That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

[Exit.]

ROMEO. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!

Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!

Hence will I to my ghostly friar's³² close cell,³³

His help to crave and my dear hap³⁴ to tell.

[Exit.]

Scene iii. FRIAR LAWRENCE's cell.

[Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE alone, with a basket.]

FRIAR. The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,

Literature

in context Literature Connection

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is deliberate exaggeration in writing or speech. For example, in lines 71–72, when Romeo says the look in Juliet's eyes is more dangerous than twenty of her kinsmen's swords, he uses hyperbole to express the power in the beauty of her eyes. Several times in this scene, as in line 169, both young lovers use hyperbole to emphasize their love.

Literary Analysis
Blank Verse and Character Rank Based on the fact that Romeo and Juliet speak in blank verse, what can you conclude about their character rank?

30. wanton's spoiled, playful child's.

31. gyves (jivz) chains.

32. ghostly friar's spiritual father's.

33. close cell small room.

34. dear hap good fortune.

Reading Strategy
Reading Blank Verse
How do the punctuation marks in Romeo's parting comment help you understand the meaning of his words?



NURSE. O God's Lady dear!

Are you so hot?¹¹ Marry come up, I trow.¹²
Is this the poultice¹³ for my aching bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

65 **JULIET.** Here's such a coil!¹⁴ Come, what says Romeo?

NURSE. Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

JULIET. I have.

NURSE. Then hie you hence to Friar Lawrence' cell;
There stays a husband to make you a wife.

70 Now comes the wanton¹⁵ blood up in your cheeks:
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.

Hie you to church: I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark.

75 I am the drudge, and toil in your delight:
But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go; I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

JULIET. Hie to high fortune! Honest nurse, farewell.

[Exit all.]

Scene vi. FRIAR LAWRENCE's cell.

[Enter FRIAR LAWRENCE and ROMEO.]

FRIAR. So smile the heavens upon this holy act
That afterhours with sorrow chide us not!¹

ROMEO. Amen, amen! But come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail² the exchange of joy
5 That one short minute gives me in her sight.
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare—
It is enough I may but call her mine.

FRIAR. These violent delights have violent ends
10 And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,³
Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness
And in the taste confounds⁴ the appetite.
Therefore love moderately: long love doth so;
15 Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

[Enter JULIET.]

Here comes the lady. O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.⁵
A lover may bestride the gossamers⁶
That idles in the wanton summer air,
20 And yet not fall; so light is vanity.⁷

11. hot impatient; hot tempered.

12. Marry . . . trow Indeed, cool down, I say

13. poultice remedy

14. coil disturbance

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse Why do I think Shakespeare broke the pattern of blank verse in line 67?

15. wanton excited

Literary Analysis

Blank Verse What effect is created by making Juliet's last line rhyme with the Nurse's last line?

1. That . . . not! that the future does not punish us with sorrow.

2. countervail equal.

3. powder gunpowder

4. confounds destroys

5. flint stone.

6. gossamers spider webs.

7. vanity foolish things that cannot last.

JULIET. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

FRIAR. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

JULIET. As much to him,⁸ else is his thanks too much.

ROMEO. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heaped like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it,⁹ then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbor air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

JULIET. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament.¹⁰
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

FRIAR. Come, come with me, and we will make short work;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till Holy Church incorporate two in one.

[Exit all.]

8. As . . . him the same greeting to him.

Reading Strategy

Reading Blank Verse

How can you read Romeo's lines most effectively to grasp their meaning as well as their poetry?

9. and . . . it and if you are better able to proclaim it.

10. Conceit . . . ornament Understanding does not need to be dressed up in words.

Review and Assess

Thinking About Act II

1. **Respond:** Do you think Friar Lawrence is wise to agree to marry Romeo and Juliet? Explain.
2. (a) **Recall:** Where do Romeo and Juliet first mutually declare their love for each other? (b) **Interpret:** What role does darkness play in the scene?
3. (a) **Recall:** What doubts and fears does Juliet express even as she realizes that Romeo loves her? (b) **Make a Judgment:** Do you think the couple will be able to overcome these problems? Explain.
4. (a) **Recall:** What weakness in Romeo does the Friar point out before agreeing to help? (b) **Compare and Contrast:** How do the Friar's motives differ from the couple's own motives?
5. (a) **Recall:** For whom does Juliet wait in Act II, Scene v? (b) **Interpret:** What are Juliet's feelings as she waits to hear the message Romeo has sent?
6. **Analyze:** What tragic events to come are foreshadowed in Act II?
7. **Evaluate:** Why do you think the love scene in Capulet's garden is one of the most famous in all of literature?