



Act III

Review and Anticipate

In Act II, Romeo and Juliet express their mutual love and enlist the aid of Juliet's nurse and Friar Lawrence to arrange a secret marriage ceremony. As the act closes, the young couple are about to be married. Before performing the ceremony, the Friar warns, "These violent delights have violent ends. . . ." How might this statement hint at events that will occur in Act III or later in the play?

Scene i. A public place.

[Enter MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, and MEN.]

BENVOLIO. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.
The day is hot, the Capels are abroad,
And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl,
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

⁵ **MERCUTIO.** Thou art like one of these fellows that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table and says, "God send me no need of thee!" and by the operation of the second cup draws him on the drawer,¹ when indeed there is no need.

¹⁰ **BENVOLIO.** Am I like such a fellow?

1. and . . . drawer and by the effect of the second drink, draws his sword against the waiter.

✓ Reading Check

Why does Benvolio want to get off the street?

MERCUTIO. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon moved to be moody, and as soon moody to be moved.²

BENVOLIO. And what to?

15 **MERCUTIO.** Nay, and there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! Why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having
20 no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle³ as an egg for quarreling. Thou hast quarreled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out
25 with a tailor for wearing his new doublet⁴ before Easter? With another for tying his new shoes with old riband?⁵ And yet thou wilt tutor me from quarreling!⁶

BENVOLIO. And I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple⁷ of my life for an hour and a quarter.⁸

30 **MERCUTIO.** The fee simple? O simple!⁹

[Enter TYBALT, PETRUCHIO, and OTHERS.]

BENVOLIO. By my head, here comes the Capulets.

MERCUTIO. By my heel, I care not.

TYBALT. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.
35 Gentlemen, good-den. A word with one of you.

MERCUTIO. And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT. You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, and you will give me occasion.¹⁰

40 **MERCUTIO.** Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT. Mercutio, thou consortest¹¹ with Romeo.

MERCUTIO. Consort?¹² What, dost thou make us minstrels? And thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords.¹³
45 Here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. Zounds,¹⁴ consort!

BENVOLIO. We talk here in the public haunt of men.
Either withdraw unto some private place,
Or reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart. Here all eyes gaze on us.

50 **MERCUTIO.** Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze.
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

2. and . . . moved and as quickly stirred to anger as you are eager to be so stirred.

Literary Analysis
Soliloquy, Aside, and Monologue Which details of Mercutio's speech indicate that it is a monologue and not a soliloquy?

3. addle scrambled; crazy.

4. doublet jacket.

5. riband ribbon.

6. tutor . . . quarreling instruct me not to quarrel.

7. fee simple complete possession.

8. an hour and a quarter length of time that a man with Mercutio's fondness for quarreling may be expected to live.

9. O simple! O stupid!

Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing How would you paraphrase the exchange between Tybalt and Mercutio to make its tone and meaning understandable to a reader today?

10. occasion cause; reason.

11. consortest associate with.

12. Consort associate with; consort also meant a group of musicians.

13. discords harsh sounds.

14. Zounds exclamation of surprise or anger ("By God's wounds").

[Enter ROMEO.]

TYBALT. Well, peace be with you, sir. Here comes my man.¹⁵

MERCUTIO. But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery.¹⁶
Marry, go before to field,¹⁷ he'll be your follower!
Your worship in that sense may call him man.

TYBALT. Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford
No better term than this: thou art a villain.¹⁸

ROMEO. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee
Doth much excuse the appertaining¹⁹ rage
To such a greeting. Villain am I none.
Therefore farewell. I see thou knowest me not.

TYBALT. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

ROMEO. I do protest I never injured thee,
But love thee better than thou canst devise²⁰
Till thou shalt know the reason of my love;
And so, good Capulet, which name I tender²¹
As dearly as mine own, be satisfied.

MERCUTIO. O calm, dishonorable, vile submission!
Alla stoccata²² carries it away. [Draws.]
Tybalt, you ratcatcher, will you walk?

TYBALT. What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO. Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives.
That I mean to make bold withal,²³ and, as you shall use me
here-after, dry-beat²⁴ the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your
sword out of his pilcher²⁵ by the ears? Make haste, lest mine be
about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT. I am for you.

[Draws.]

ROMEO. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO. Come, sir, your *passado*! [They fight.]

ROMEO. Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons.
Gentlemen, for shame! Forbear this outrage!
Tybalt, Mercutio, the Prince expressly hath
Forbidden this bandying in Verona streets.
Hold, Tybalt! Good Mercutio!

[TYBALT under ROMEO'S arm thrusts MERCUTIO in, and flies.]

MERCUTIO. I am hurt.

A plague a²⁶ both houses! I am sped.²⁷

Is he gone and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO.

What, art thou hurt?

15. **man** the man I'm looking for; "man" also meant "manservant."

16. **livery** servant's uniform.

17. **field** dueling place.

18. **villain** low, vulgar person.

19. **appertaining** appropriate.

20. **devise** understand; imagine.

21. **tender** value.

22. **Alla stoccata** at the thrust—an Italian fencing term that Mercutio uses as a nickname for Tybalt.

23. **make bold withal** make bold with; take.

24. **dry-beat** thrash.

25. **pilcher** scabbard.

26. **a** on.

27. **sped** wounded; done for.

Reading Check

What is the outcome of the duel between Tybalt and Mercutio?

MERCUTIO. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, 'tis enough.
Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon. [Exit PAGE.]

90 **ROMEO.** Courage, man. The hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered,²⁸ I warrant, for this world. A plague a both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a
95 mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic!²⁹ Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO. I thought all for the best.

MERCUTIO. Help me into some house, Benvolio,
100 Or I shall faint. A plague a both your houses!
They have made worms' meat of me. I have it,³⁰
And soundly too. Your houses! [Exit MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO.]

ROMEO. This gentleman, the Prince's near ally,³¹
My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt
105 In my behalf—my reputation stained
With Tybalt's slander—Tybalt, that an hour
Hath been my cousin. O sweet Juliet,
Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
And in my temper soft'ned valor's steel!

[Enter BENVOLIO.]

110 **BENVOLIO.** O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio is dead!
That gallant spirit hath aspired³² the clouds,
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

ROMEO. This day's black fate on moe³³ days doth depend;³⁴
This but begins the woe others must end.

[Enter TYBALT.]

115 **BENVOLIO.** Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

ROMEO. Alive in triumph, and Mercutio slain?
Away to heaven respective lenity,³⁵
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct³⁶ now!
Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again
120 That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul
Is but a little way above our heads,
Staying for thine to keep him company.
Either thou or I, or both, must go with him.

TYBALT. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
125 Shalt with him hence.

ROMEO. This shall determine that.
[They fight. TYBALT falls.]

28. peppered finished off

29. by . . . arithmetic by formal rules.

30. I have it I've got my deathblow.

31. ally relative.

Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing How does Romeo say Juliet has changed him? What does he mean?

gallant (gal' ənt) adj.
brave and noble

32. aspired climbed to.

33. moe more.

34. depend hang over.

Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing How would you paraphrase Romeo's words to Tybalt?

35. respective lenity thoughtful mercy.

36. conduct guide.

BENVOLIO. Romeo, away, be gone!
The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.
Stand not amazed. The Prince will doom thee death
If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

130 ROMEO. O, I am fortune's fool!³⁷

BENVOLIO.

Why dost thou stay? [Exit ROMEO.]

[Enter CITIZENS.]

CITIZEN. Which way ran he that killed Mercutio?
Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

BENVOLIO. There lies that Tybalt.

CITIZEN. Up, sir, go with me.
I charge thee in the Prince's name obey.

[Enter PRINCE, OLD MONTAGUE, CAPULET, their WIVES, and all.]

135 PRINCE. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

BENVOLIO. O noble Prince, I can discover³⁸ all
The unlucky manage³⁹ of this fatal brawl.
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

140 LADY CAPULET. Tybalt, my cousin! O my brother's child!
O Prince! O cousin! Husband! O, the blood is spilled
Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,



Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing What urgent warning is Benvolio giving Romeo?

37. fool plaything.

fray (frā) *n.* noisy fight

38. discover reveal.

Reading Strategy

Paraphrasing Has Benvolio reported the facts accurately?

39. manage course.

◀ Critical Viewing

Using this picture, explain the emotions on the street after Romeo kills Tybalt. [Make a Judgment]

✓ Reading Check

What does Romeo do to Tybalt?

For blood of ours shed blood of Montague.
O cousin, cousin!

145 **PRINCE.** Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

BENVOLIO. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay.

Romeo, that spoke him fair, bid him bethink
How nice⁴⁰ the quarrel was, and urged withal
Your high displeasure. All this—uttered
150 With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bowed—
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen⁴¹
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts⁴²
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
155 And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it. Romeo he cries aloud,
"Hold, friends! Friends, part!" and swifter than his tongue,
160 His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious⁴³ thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled;
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
165 Who had but newly entertained⁴⁴ revenge,
And to't they go like lightning; for, ere I
Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.
This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

170 **LADY CAPULET.** He is a kinsman to the Montague;
Affection makes him false, he speaks not true.
Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give.
175 Romeo slew Tybalt; Romeo must not live.

PRINCE. Romeo slew him; he slew Mercutio.
Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

MONTAGUE. Not Romeo, Prince; he was Mercutio's friend;
His fault concludes but what the law should end,
The life of Tybalt.⁴⁵

180 **PRINCE.** And for that offense
Immediately we do exile him hence.
I have an interest in your hate's proceeding.
My blood⁴⁶ for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding;
But I'll amerce⁴⁷ you with so strong a fine
185 That you shall all repent the loss of mine.
I will be deaf to pleading and excuses;

Reading Strategy
Paraphrasing What does Lady Capulet ask the Prince to do?

40. nice trivial.

41. spleen angry nature.

42. tilts thrusts.

martial (mä'r shəl) adj.
military

Literary Analysis
Soliloquy, Aside, and Monologue Is Benvolio's monologue describing the fight factual or biased? How do you know?

43. envious full of hatred.

44. entertained considered.

45. His fault . . . Tybalt by killing Tybalt, he did what the law would have done.

Reading Strategy
Paraphrasing Restate Montague's remarks in your own words.

exile (eks' il') v. banish

46. My blood Mercutio was related to the Prince.

47. amerce punish.

Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out abuses.
Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste,
Else, when he is found, that hour is his last.
Bear hence this body and attend our will.⁴⁸
Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

48. attend our will
await my decision.

[Exit with others.]

Scene ii. CAPULET'S orchard.

[Enter JULIET alone.]

JULIET. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,¹
Towards Phoebus' lodging!² Such a wagoner
As Phaëton³ would whip you to the west
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
That runaways' eyes may wink,⁴ and Romeo
Leap to these arms untalked of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites,
And by their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.
Hood my unmanned blood, bating in my cheeks,⁵
With thy black mantle till strange⁶ love grow bold,
Think true love acted simple modesty,
Come, night; come, Romeo; come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.
Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-browed night;
Give me my Romeo; and when I shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possessed it; and though I am sold,
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,

[Enter NURSE, with cords.]

And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.
Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there, the cords
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

Ay, ay, the cords.

1. fiery-footed steeds
horses of the sun god,
Phoebus.

2. Phoebus' lodging
below the horizon.

3. Phaëton Phoebus' son,
who tried to drive his
father's horses but was
unable to control them.

4. That runaways' eyes
may wink so that the eyes
of busybodies may not see.

5. Hood . . . cheeks hide
the untamed blood that
makes me blush.

6. strange unfamiliar.

Literary Analysis

Soliloquy, Aside, and
Monologue Should

Juliet's speech be
classified as a monologue,
a soliloquy, or an aside?
Why?

eloquence (el' ə kwəns) n.
speech that is vivid,
forceful, graceful, and
persuasive

✓ Reading Check

What punishment does the
Prince order for Romeo?