

Romeo and Juliet Act 2 Summary Notes

See Act 2 PowerPoint to accompany notes.

Play Quia review games and take my Quia practice quizzes to prepare yourself for quizzes and the final exam.

Act 2 Prologue

- Summarizes Act 1
- Addresses the speed in which Romeo and Juliet have fallen in love
- Makes fun at the way in which Romeo abandoned Rosaline quickly for Juliet
- *Now old desire doth in his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir;
That fair for which love groan'd for and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.*

Act 2, Scene 1

- Romeo's friends, Mercutio and Benvolio, go looking for Romeo.
- They think that Romeo is still in love with Rosaline.
- Benvolio and Mercutio do not know that Romeo is headed to the Capulet orchard.
- They do not know Romeo is now in love with Juliet
- Mercutio calls out to Romeo in search of him by teasing him about Rosaline's seductive beauty.
 - **Mercutio:** *I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!*
- Romeo hides.
- Benvolio asks that he leave Romeo alone.
- After much joking around, Mercutio and Benvolio give up and go home to bed.
- Romeo symbolically separates from his friends in this scene when he jumps over the Capulet wall.
- He cannot let his friends know he is in love with Juliet.
- For Mercutio, love is a physical conquest.
- Mercutio is Romeo's foil in that Romeo views love romantically & spiritually.
- Romeo describes Juliet in terms of light images.
- Juliet is the sun, a torch, bright angel
- Juliet = light & truth
- Rosaline = darkness & moon
- Romeo has moved beyond darkness to light

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Act 2, Scene 2

- *The Famous Balcony Scene*
- Romeo climbs over the Capulet's garden wall and hides in the garden below Juliet's window.
- He can't decide to speak or listen
 - **Romeo:** *Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this*
- Romeo overhears Juliet talking to herself in her famous soliloquy
 - Her monologue lets Romeo know she is interested in him
- Juliet says that she will disown her family so she can be with Romeo.
- Juliet hates the name "Montague" not the person "Romeo."
 - **Juliet:** *What's in a name? that which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name which is no part of thee
Take all myself.*
- Romeo answers Juliet.
- Romeo is willing to change his name just to be with Juliet
- and says that Juliet's family cannot stop their love.
- Juliet says that she is afraid that her family will kill Romeo if they find him.
 - **Romeo replies:** *I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;
And but thou love me, let them find me here:
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.*
- Romeo says he would rather die than live without Juliet.
- After hearing Romeo speak words of love, Juliet wonders if their love came too quickly and easily.
- Juliet doesn't want Romeo to promise that he loves her; she wants him to prove it through his actions by proposing marriage!
- Romeo proposes and Juliet accepts.
- Juliet says that if Romeo is serious about marriage, he must go and arrange the wedding.
- *Remember: they have only known each other a few hours!*
- Notice the scenes in which Romeo and Juliet are together are dark.
 - Darkness = secrecy
 - Romeo must leave Juliet when it becomes light.
 - Light = truth & exposure (their families are natural enemies)

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- Romeo views Juliet as a very pure; he uses religious imagery by calling her “dear saint” and “bright angel.”
- Romeo says he will have the wedding arranged by 9:00 am.
- Romeo goes to the Friar to arrange the marriage.
- Juliet promises to follow Romeo through the world after marriage no matter what.

FORESHADOWING

Act 2, Scene 3

- Romeo goes to visit Friar Lawrence
- Friar Lawrence is alone in his garden tending to plants and herbs
- He says that nothing is completely good or evil. It is how it is used.
- His monologue hints at his involvement in the tragedy to come.
- The audience is now aware that Friar has a strong understanding of drugs.

FORESHADOWING

- Romeo explains to Friar:
 - he no longer loves Rosaline and
 - he is now in love with Juliet
 - **Romeo:** *Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine*
- he asks Friar Lawrence to marry them today!

- Friar Lawrence is shocked! He tells Romeo:
 - that Romeo says the words of love
 - but he really doesn't really understand true love.
 - **Friar Lawrence:** *Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.*

- Friar Lawrence isn't sure this marriage is a good idea but
- he agrees to marry them
- because he thinks it will stop the feud between the two families.
 - **Friar Lawrence:** *In one respect I'll thy assistant be;
For this alliance may so happy prove,
To turn your households' rancour to pure love.*

- Friar Lawrence gives Romeo good advice:
“Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast.”

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Act 2, Scene 4

- The morning after the Capulet party, Benvolio & Mercutio search for Romeo.
- Mercutio blames Romeo's absence on Rosaline.
- They still don't know about Juliet.

- Tybalt has sent a letter to Romeo challenging him to a duel.
- Benvolio believes Romeo will respond.
- Tybalt can't imagine Romeo, the romantic, fighting the fiery Tybalt.

- Benvolio & Mercutio discuss how Tybalt is an expert at dueling
- Tybalt is still upset because Romeo was at the Capulet party.
- Tybalt looks for fights; he is a hothead

- After arranging *the secret* marriage, Romeo meets them and he is in a much better mood.
- Mercutio is happy that Romeo is over Rosaline.
- Romeo and Mercutio trade a long series of puns.

- Nurse comes and finds Romeo at noon and not 9:00 am as promised.
- Mercutio teases the nurse & upsets her.
- Mercutio lifts her veil and calls it a sail; he refers to her as a madam of a prostitution house; he makes fun of her age and of her lack of beauty

- Romeo tells the nurse about the plan for the wedding.
- Juliet is to go to confession at Friar Laurence's room that afternoon.
- They will be married there.
- Romeo's servant will give a rope ladder to the Nurse.
- Romeo will use it to climb into Juliet's room for their wedding night.

- Nurse tells Romeo that
 - she thinks that Paris would make a Juliet better husband.
 - Juliet doesn't agree with her.

Act 2, Scene 5

- Juliet is very nervous as she waits for Nurse to return from meeting Romeo.
- Nurse is 3 hours late.
- Nurse teases Juliet by not giving her Romeo's message immediately.
- The Nurse shows herself to be like Mercutio when she describes Romeo's physical attributes as Mercutio had described Rosaline's.

- Juliet prepares to go to Friar Laurence to get married.
- Juliet will tell her parents she is going to "shrift" / confession.
- Nurse leaves to collect the rope ladder so that Romeo can spend his wedding night with Juliet.

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Act 2, Scene 6

- Before Juliet arrives Romeo and Friar Laurence talk.
- Friar Laurence prays that God will bless the wedding regardless of what else might happen to the couple, and warns that “things” that happen so fast often end just as quickly (and explosively). *FORESHADOWING*
 - **Friar Laurence:** *These violent delights have violent ends
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder. . .
Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.*
- When Juliet arrives, Romeo uses many poetic words to describe her and their love.
- Romeo believes that not even death can compete with his love for Juliet
- They secretly marry.
- Their wedding is quick and is filled with images of impending doom.
- Images of happiness and marriage are paired with violence and death.
- Romeo says “love-devouring death” can do what it pleases; Juliet is all he needs to make him happy
- *“These violent delights have violent ends/And in their triumph die, like fire/ and powder,. . ./ Therefore love moderately; long love doth so;
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.”—Friar Lawrence*