

Friar Laurence. Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?

13 **bare:** carried (bore).

Friar John. I could not send it—here it is again—

15 Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,

So fearful were they of infection.

Friar Laurence. Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice, but full of charge,
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
20 May do much danger. Friar John, go hence,
Get me an iron crow and bring it straight
Unto my cell.

18–20 The letter wasn't trivial (nice) but contained a message of great importance (dear import). The fact that it wasn't sent (neglecting it) may cause great harm.

21 **iron crow:** crowbar.

Friar John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee.

[Exit.]

Friar Laurence. Now must I to the monument alone.
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.
25 She will beshrew me much that Romeo
Hath had no notice of these accidents;
But I will write again to Mantua,
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come—
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man's tomb! C

25–26 **She . . . accidents:** She will be furious with me when she learns that Romeo doesn't know what has happened.

C **SOLILOQUY**

Explain what you learn about the friar's new plan in this soliloquy.

Why is it essential that the friar reach Juliet before Romeo does?

start here

SCENE 3 *The cemetery that contains the Capulets' tomb.*

In the dark of night Paris comes to the cemetery to put flowers on Juliet's grave. At the same time Romeo arrives, and Paris hides. Paris assumes that Romeo is going to harm the bodies. He challenges Romeo, they fight, and Romeo kills Paris. When Romeo recognizes the dead Paris, he lays his body inside the tomb as Paris requested. Romeo declares his love for Juliet, drinks the poison, and dies. Shortly after, Friar Laurence arrives and discovers both bodies. When Juliet wakes up, the friar urges her to leave with him before the guard comes. Juliet refuses, and when the friar leaves, she kills herself with Romeo's dagger. The guards and the prince arrive, followed by the Capulets and Lord Montague, whose wife has just died of grief because of Romeo's exile. Friar Laurence explains what has happened. Capulet and Montague finally end their feud and promise to erect statues honoring Romeo and Juliet.

[Enter Paris and his Page with flowers and a torch.]

Paris. Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.

1 **aloof:** some distance away.

Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.

Under yond yew tree lay thee all along,

Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground.

Behind the Curtain

The Royal Shakespeare Company's 2004 production



The Shakespeare Israeli Company's 1994 production



Lighting

Directors use a variety of techniques to make a play's **lighting** effective. For example, spotlights can illuminate one character while leaving others in semi-darkness, and effects such as candles or prominent shadows can help create specific moods. What is distinctive about the lighting in each of these shots? Explain the effect each technique produces.

The Royal Opera House's 2000 Covent Garden production



5 So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread
(Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves)
But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,
As signal that thou hearst something approach.
Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.

10 **Page** [aside]. I am almost afraid to stand alone
Here in the churchyard; yet I will adventure.
[withdraws]

Paris. Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew
[He strews the tomb with flowers.]
(O woe! thy canopy is dust and stones)
Which with sweet water nightly I will dew;
15 Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans.
The obsequies that I for thee will keep
Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

[The Page whistles.]

The boy gives warning something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way tonight
20 To cross my obsequies and true love's rite?
What, with a torch? Muffle me, night, awhile.

[withdraws]

[Enter Romeo and Balthasar with a torch, a mattock, and a crow of iron.]

Romeo. Give me that mattock and the wrenching iron.
Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
25 Give me the light. Upon thy life I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hearest or seest, stand all aloof
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death
Is partly to behold my lady's face,
30 But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring—a ring that I must use
In dear employment. Therefore hence, be gone.
But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
In what I farther shall intend to do,
35 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint
And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.
The time and my intents are savage-wild,
More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea. **D**

12–17 Paris promises to decorate Juliet's grave with flowers, as he does now, and sprinkle it with either perfume (**sweet water**) or his tears. He will perform these honoring rites (**obsequies**) every night.

20 **cross:** interfere with.

21 **muffle:** hide.

mattock . . . iron: an ax and a crowbar.

32 **in dear employment:** for an important purpose.

33 **jealous:** curious.

37–39 Romeo's intention is more unstoppable (**inexorable**) than hungry (**empty**) tigers or the waves of an ocean.

D TRAGEDY

Reread lines 25–39 and think about how tragedies usually end for the main characters. Paraphrase the two reasons Romeo gives for going into the tomb. What third reason does he hint at?

40 **Balthasar.** I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Romeo. So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that. Live, and be prosperous; and farewell, good fellow.

Balthasar [aside]. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout. His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.

[withdraws]

45 **Romeo.** Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death, Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth, Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open, And in despite I'll cram thee with more food.

[Romeo *opens the tomb.*]

Paris. This is that banish'd haughty Montague
50 That murdered my love's cousin—with which grief
It is supposed the fair creature died—
And here is come to do some villainous shame
To the dead bodies. I will apprehend him.
Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!
55 Can vengeance be pursued further than death?
Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee.
Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

Romeo. I must indeed; and therefore came I hither.
Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man.
60 Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone;
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,
Put not another sin upon my head
By urging me to fury. O, be gone!
By heaven, I love thee better than myself.
65 For I come hither armed against myself.
Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

Paris. I do defy thy conjuration
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

70 **Romeo.** Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy! E

[*They fight.*]

43 Who else besides Balthasar is hiding in the cemetery at this point?

45–49 Romeo addresses the tomb as though it were devouring people. He calls it a hateful stomach (**detestable maw**) that is filled (**gorged**) with Juliet, the **dearest morsel of the earth**. He uses his crowbar to open its **rotten jaws** and moves to enter the tomb.

49–53 Recognizing Romeo, Paris speaks these first few lines to himself. He is angry with Romeo, believing that Romeo's killing Tybalt caused Juliet to die of grief.

58–67 Romeo rejects Paris' challenge. He tells Paris to think of those already killed and to leave before Romeo is forced to kill him too. Romeo swears that he has come to harm himself, not Paris.

68 I reject your appeal.

E CHARACTER

Consider what you know about Romeo's **traits** and **flaws**. Is Romeo at fault for fighting Paris? Why or why not?

Page. O Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

[*Exit.*]

Paris. O, I am slain! [*falls*] If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[*dies*]

Romeo. In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.

75 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!

What said my man when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think
He told me Paris should have married Juliet.
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?

80 Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so? O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.
A grave? O, no, a lantern, slaughtered youth,
85 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting presence full of light.
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred.

[*lays Paris in the tomb*]

How oft when men are at the point of death
Have they been merry! which their keepers call
90 A lightning before death. O, how may I
Call this a lightning? O my love! my wife!
Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,
Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.
Thou art not conquered. Beauty's ensign yet
95 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.
Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?
O, what more favor can I do to thee
Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain
100 To sunder his that was thine enemy?
Forgive me, cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,
Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe
That unsubstantial Death is amorous,
And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
105 Thee here in dark to be his paramour?
For fear of that I still will stay with thee
And never from this palace of dim night

74–78 Romeo discovers that the man he has just killed is Paris, who he vaguely remembers being told was supposed to marry Juliet.

82 Romeo notes that, like himself, Paris has been a victim of bad luck.

84–87 Romeo will bury Paris with Juliet, whose beauty fills the tomb with light. Paris' corpse (**Death**) is being buried (**interred**) by a dead man in that Romeo expects to be dead soon.

94 **ensign:** sign.

98–100 **O, what . . . enemy:** I can best repay you (Tybalt) by killing your enemy (myself) with the same hand that cut your youth in two (**twain**).

102–105 Romeo can't get over how beautiful Juliet still looks. He asks whether Death is loving (**amorous**) and whether it has taken Juliet as its lover (**paramour**).

Depart again. Here, here will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids. O, here
110 Will I set up my everlasting rest
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh. Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace! and, lips, O you
The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
115 A dateless bargain to engrossing death!
Come, bitter conduct; come, unsavory guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks thy seasick weary bark!
Here's to my love! [drinks] O true apothecary!
120 Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

[falls]

[Enter Friar Laurence, with lantern, crow, and spade.]

Friar Laurence. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft tonight
Have my old feet stumbled at graves! Who's there?

Balthasar. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you well.

Friar Laurence. Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
125 What torch is yond that vainly lends his light
To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,
It burneth in the Capels' monument.

Balthasar. It doth so, holy sir; and there's my master,
One that you love.

Friar Laurence. Who is it?

Balthasar. Romeo.

130 **Friar Laurence.** How long hath he been there?

Balthasar. Full half an hour.

Friar Laurence. Go with me to the vault.

Balthasar. I dare not, sir.
My master knows not but I am gone hence,
And fearfully did menace me with death
If I did stay to look on his intents.

135 **Friar Laurence.** Stay then; I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me.
O, much I fear some ill unthrifty thing.

111–112 shake . . . flesh: rid myself of the burden of an unhappy fate (**inauspicious stars**). *On what does Romeo blame his imminent death?*

115 dateless: eternal; never-ending. Romeo means that what he is about to do can never be undone.

117–118 Romeo compares himself to the pilot of a ship (**bark**) who is going to crash on the rocks because he is so weary and sick.

Language Coach

Oral Fluency In line 125, *yond* is short for *yonder*, meaning “over there.” Why is *yond* better than *yonder* in this line?

132–134 My master . . . intents: My master told me to go away and threatened me with death if I watched what he did.

136 unthrifty: unlucky.

Balthasar. As I did sleep under this yew tree here,
I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

Friar Laurence. Romeo!

[stoops and looks on the blood and weapons]

140 Alack, alack, what blood is this which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulcher?
What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolored by this place of peace?

[enters the tomb]

Romeo! O, pale! Who else? What, Paris too?
145 And steeped in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!
The lady stirs.

[Juliet rises.]

Juliet. O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
150 And there I am. Where is my Romeo?

Friar Laurence. I hear some noise. Lady, come from that nest

140–143 Alack . . . place of peace? Why
are these bloody swords lying here
at the tomb (**sepulcher**), a place that
should be peaceful? (The swords are also
masterless, or without their owners.)

148 **comfortable:** comforting.



Romeo and Juliet in the 1999 production

Romeo and Juliet in the 2004
production of the Globe Theatre

Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.
A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.
155 Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
And Paris too. Come, I'll dispose of thee
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.
Come, go, good Juliet. I dare no longer stay.

160 **Juliet.** Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.

[*Exit Friar Laurence.*]

What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.
O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips.
165 Haply some poison yet doth hang on them
To make me die with a restorative.

[*kisses him*]

Thy lips are warm!

Chief Watchman [*within*]. Lead, boy. Which way?

Juliet. Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!

[*snatches Romeo's dagger*]

170 This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die.

[*She stabs herself and falls.*]

153–154 **A greater . . . intents:** A greater force than we can fight (**contradict**) has ruined our plans (**thwarted our intents**).

156–157 **I'll dispose . . . nuns:** I'll find a place for you in a convent of nuns.

158–159 **Why is the friar so anxious to leave?**

162 **timeless:** happening before its proper time.

163 **churl:** miser.

165 **haply:** perhaps.

stop here

Page. This is the place. There, where the torch doth burn.

Chief Watchman. The ground is bloody. Search about the churchyard.

Go, some of you; whoe'er you find attach.

173 **attach:** arrest.

[*Exeunt some of the Watch.*]

Pitiful sight! here lies the County slain;

175 And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain this two days buried.

Go, tell the Prince; run to the Capulets;

Raise up the Montagues; some others search.

178 **raise up:** awaken.

[*Exeunt others of the Watch.*]

We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,

180 But the true ground of all these piteous woes
We cannot without circumstance descry.

[*Reenter some of the Watch, with Balthasar.*]

179–181 **We see . . . descry:** We see the earth (**ground**) these bodies lie on. But the real cause (**true ground**) of these deaths is yet for us to discover (**descry**).