

# **ROMEO & JULIET: A TRAGEDY? (CHILDREN'S VERSION)**

Based on the opera *Roméo et Juliette*  
by Charles Gounod and Jules Barbier/Michel Carré  
and  
*Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

Music by Charles Gounod  
Libretto/Adaptation by Joshua Borths

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### Scene 3

*the scene shifts to a street in Verona. The cue card changes to "Act Three: The Street." Music begins.*

**PERFORMER #1**

As all of this happiness was set into motion,  
Over—across town—was quite the commotion.

**PERFORMER #2**

Tybalt, a cousin of our Juliet,  
Was out on the streets where *this* scene is currently set.

**PERFORMER #1**

Tybalt liked to taunt. He liked to boast.  
If only he'd known that soon he'd be toast.

*Tybalt enters. He is crass and vulgar. He sings directly to the audience, challenging them.*

**TYBALT**

OH, I AM A BIG OL' BULLY  
LIKE MY DAD BEFORE ME.  
I'M LIKE MY ENTIRE FAM'LY.  
I'VE NOT FALLEN FAR FROM THE TREE.

'CAUSE I'D LIKE TO START A STREET BRAWL,  
PROVING CAPULET'S ARE THE BEST.

THIS IS THE AGE-OLD TEST:  
IF THEY RUN WHEN THEY HEAR YOUR CALL,  
OR YOUR RIVALS BEGIN TO BAWL,  
THEN YOU PROVE MASTERY OVER ALL!

LOOK OUT, YOU VILE MONTAGUES!  
HERE COMES "YOU-KNOW-WHO!"  
IT'S THE CAPULET, TYBALT,  
SO STOP WHEN I YELL, "HALT!"  
I'M THE CAPULET, TYBALT,  
AND I CRY, "HALT!"

*Mercutio enters. Tybalt blocks his way past him.*

Halt! I know you,  
You are Mercutio, the Montague!

**MERCUTIO**

*Confidently* GOOD DAY TO YOU, TYBALT. I'LL JUST BE ON MY WAY.  
WHILE I WOULD LOVE TO STAY AND CHAT, I DON'T HAVE TIME TODAY.

*Mercutio tries to get around Tybalt.*

**TYBALT**

I WON'T LET YOU PASS!

**MERCUTIO**

*Taunting* ALAS, ALAS!  
THEN YOU DO DON'T KNOW  
WHAT WENT ON WITH JULIET AND ROMEO?  
IT WAS QUITE THE SHOW!

**TYBALT**

*Upset* HOW DARE YOU SAY WHAT YOU INFER!  
NO! HE CANNOT FALL IN LOVE WITH HER!

**MERCUTIO**

*Incredulous* DO YOU DOUBT WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU?!  
AM I A LIAR SPREADING UNTRUTHS?

**TYBALT**

*Mockingly* OH NO, I'VE WOUNDED YOUR PRIDE!

**MERCUTIO**

*Seriously* GET READY!

**TYBALT AND MERCUTIO**

THIS IS YOUR FINAL CHANCE TO STEP ASIDE!

*Tybalt and Mercutio begin to "fight." This should be staged as a "Keystone cop" chase sequence (if schools or producing organizations are uncomfortable with Shakespearean fights). This can be staged more like a playground game than a violent battle.*

*Using the whole audience for the staging and to egg the other side on, this sequence should get all of the kids' attention. Both are "injured" during the action.*

*Romeo appears, seeing the end of the fight.*

**ROMEO**

Stop! Mercutio, stop!

WHAT'S THIS? MORE FIGHTING IN THE STREETS AGAIN?  
JUST LOOK AT US! WHEN WILL THIS END?  
I HAVE A WAY TO END ALL OF OUR FEUDING:  
WE MUST RESPECT EACH OTHER AND BEGIN LOVING.  
SO, GET UP AND SHAKE HANDS,  
AS FRIENDS.

*Tybalt and Mercutio continue to skirmish.*

**TYBALT**

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT YOU THINK I CAN BE FRIENDS WITH MERCUTIO! OH, NO!

**ROMEO**

JUST LISTEN TO ME AND YOU'LL SEE  
IT IS TIME TO UNITE OUR FAMILIES.

*Romeo stops the two rivals from fighting.*

**MERCUTIO**

*To Romeo* GET OUT OF MY WAY, ROMEO! HE WOUNDED ME,  
SO YOU MUST HELP ME!

*To Tybalt* YOU, CAPULET, LET'S SETTLE ONCE AND FOR ALL.

*Gesturing to Romeo but talking to Tybalt* WE ARE BOTH MONTAGUES AND YOUR FAMILY WILL  
FALL!

**ROMEO**

*Holding Mercutio back* MERCUTIO! DO NOT ENGAGE!

**MERCUTIO**

*To Romeo* NO! HE'LL GET A TASTE OF MY RAGE!

DON'T YOU SEE, WE CAN'T CHANGE?

*To Tybalt* TYBALT,  
YOU CAPULET!

*He breaks away from Romeo.*

**TYBALT**

YOU, MONTAGUE!

**ROMEO**

*To himself* WHAT CAN I DO?

**MERCUTIO**

I'M COMING FOR YOU!

*The fight continues. while still not violent, the fight is more serious than it was before. As the music changes, Tybalt hurts Mercutio. Romeo is about to hurt Tybalt when Juliet appears.*

*Juliet sees them, and they freeze in their active tableau when they hear her voice.*

**JULIET**

AH! WHAT'S THIS? TYBALT? *Once music stops, taking in the rest of the tableau* Mercutio? And Romeo?

**TYBALT**

*Pointing at Mercutio* HE STARTED IT!

**MERCUTIO**

*Pointing at Tybalt* HE STARTED IT!

**JULIET**

*To all three* DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE TRUTH IS?  
A CURSE ON ALL OF YOUR HOUSES!

**ROMEO**

*Breaking out of the tableau* JULIET, I REGRET HATING THIS CAPULET.  
WE MUST GET OUT OF HERE AND RETURN WHEN THE COAST IS CLEAR.

*Mercutio and Tybalt separate as well and cross to each respective side of the stage "licking their wounds."*

**JULIET**

No, we cannot just run away.  
*To Romeo* But, I'm afraid you can't stay.

My father is coming, full of rage and anger,  
And if he sees you, you'll be in very real danger.

My father discovered that we are now wed,  
And wants nothing more than my Romeo dead.

So here is my plan, even though it is fraught:  
*You* run away and make sure you're not caught.

When the time is then right I will send you a sign.  
*You* return *only* when I say that it's time.

We'll finally prove to them, once and for all,  
That our love is strong and can conquer them all.

**ROMEO**

*Giving in* I will leave, Juliet, before it's too late.  
But know that I love you, no matter our fate.

**JULIET**

No go! Before my family arrives!  
And run, go quickly, run for *our* lives!

*As Romeo and Juliet leave, Tybalt and Mercutio turn to each other.*

**TYBALT AND MERCUTIO (ROMEO AND JULIET OPTIONAL ADD)**

THIS IS NOT DONE.  
OH, NO! IT'S JUST BEGUN!

*The scene transforms to the interior of Friar Lawrence's house once again. Juliet enters first, after she calls out his name (and the BARITONE is finished changing back into his Friar Lawrence costume) he enters. The cue card now says, "Act 4: The Potion."*

**To be continued...**

**Contact Opera Classroom for perusal scripts/scores!**