

STU. 1. Amos, Amas, Amamus, Amatis, Amant! *(He throws the sweater to the ground. Student 2 takes his sweater off in the same fashion and tosses it in a pile with the other sweater.)*

STU. 2. The business of a man is to govern the world and the destiny of a woman is to charm and influence it! *(Students 3 & 4 tear their sweaters off and add them to the pile.)*

STU. 3. Without women men soon resume the savage state!

STU. 4. Let us particularly note the difference in character between the two sexes, a difference so great that one might suppose them members of two different races! *(Student 1 grabs the composition books and adds them to the pile of sweaters.)*

STU. 1. Thou shalt not lie, steal, cheat, kill — *(All the Students rip off their ties and add them to the pile.)*

ALL. LUST!! *(Student 3 pries up the floorboards again and Student 1 takes the pile of sweaters and books and puts them in the hole. The boys are bursting, ravenous, desperate to go on with the tale and their adventure. Thunder rolls and whispered voices swirl around the boys. The ghostly voices alternately frighten and excite the boys, sending them to the edge.)*

STU. 1. *(Voiceover.)*

"Two households both alike in dignity
In fair Verona where we lay our scene ... "

STU. 4. *(Voiceover.)* Act II Scene 6

STU. 2. *(Voiceover.)*

"Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo ... "

STU. 1. *(Voiceover.)* Act II Scene 2, a balcony.

STU. 3. *(Voiceover.)*

"Oh then I see, Queen Mab hath been with you ... "

STU. 4. *(Voiceover.)*

"There stays a husband to make you a wife ... "

ALL. *(Voiceover. Overlapping each other.)*

"A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life ... "

STU. 1. *(Voiceover.)*

"The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love

Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage."

ALL. *(Overlapping and repeating and building to a crescendo.)*

"The fearful passage of their death mark'd love

Is now the two hours traffic of our stage!!!"

(A huge clap of thunder and the boys hurl themselves into the next scene. Student 2 [as Benvolio] is following Student 3 [as Mercutio] who is wired, agitated, dangerous.)

STU. 2 (B).

I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire;

START

The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,

And if we meet we shall not 'scape a brawl,

For now these hot days is the mad blood stirring.

STU. 3 (M).

Thou art like one of these fellows that, when he enters the confines of 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, when indeed there is no need.

STU. 2 (B).

Am I like such a fellow?

STU. 3 (M).

Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy. 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 with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter; with another for tying his new shoes with old riband? And yet thou wilt tutor me from quarrelling! *(Student 4 jumps in as Tybalt.)*

STU. 2 (B).

By my head, here comes the Capulets.

STU. 3 (M).

By my heel, I care not.

STU. 4 (T).

Gentlemen, good e'en: a word with one of you.

STU. 3 (M).

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

STU. 4 (T).

Mercutio! Thou

(Lisping the next word.)

consortest with Romeo.

STU. 3 (M).

Consort? What, dost thou make us minstrels? And thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords.

(Student 3 grabs the fabric ready to duel.)

STU. 2 (B).

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.

STU. 3 (M).

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

(Student 3 hands one end of the fabric to Student 4, challenging him to a fight.)

Here's my fiddlestick, here's that shall make you dance.
Zounds, consort!

(Student 1 jumps in as Romeo.)

STU. 4 (T).

Well, peace be with you, sir, here comes my man.

(The fabric is held taut between the two of them as they circle each other.)

STU. 3 (M).

But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery.
Marry, go before to field, he'll be your follower.
Your worship in that sense may call him "man."

STU. 4 (T).

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

STU. 1 (R).

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

(Student 1 starts to exit.)

STU. 4 (T).

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

(Student 1 grabs one end of the fabric from Student 3 and climbs up the fabric toward Student 4.)

STU. 1 (R).

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

(Student 1 kneels in front of Student 4. Appalled at this submission, Student 3 grabs the fabric from Student 1.)

STU. 3 (M).

O calm, dishonorable, vile submission:
Alla stoccata carries it away!

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

(Students 3 & 4 circle each other.)

STU. 4 (T).

What wouldst thou have with me?

STU. 3 (M).

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

STU. 4 (T).

I am for you.

STU. 1 (R).

Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

STU. 3 (M).

Come sir, your passado.

(Recorded percussive music. They fight; it is fierce, violent, and dangerous. Student 1 tries to stop the fight, but Student 2 holds him back.)

STU. 1 (R).

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!

(Student 1 finally breaks away from Student 2 and grabs the fabric. As a result, Student 3 withstands a fatal blow.)

STU. 3 (M).

I am hurt.

A plague on both your houses. I am sped.

STU. 2 (B).

What, art thou hurt?

STU. 3 (M).

Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch. Marry, 'tis enough.
Go, fetch a surgeon.

STU. 1 (R).

Courage, man, the hurt cannot be much.

STU. 3 (M).

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, I warrant, for this world. A plague on both your houses! Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death.

(Student 3 lunges for Student 4.)

A braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic.

(Student 1 holds Student 3 back. Student 3 holds on to Student 1, barely able to stand up.)

Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

STU. 1 (R).

I thought all for the best.

(Student 3 backs away from Student 1, leaving one end of the fabric with him. As the distance grows between them, the fabric spreads out like a river of blood.)

STU. 3 (M).

A plague on both your houses,
They have made worm's meat of me.

I have it, and soundly too. A plague on both your houses!

(Student 3 lets go of the fabric, leaving Student 1 holding it, as if clutching Mercutio's bloodstained clothes.)

STU. 1 (R).

This day's black fate on mo' days doth depend:

This but begins the woe others must end.

Away to heaven respective lenity,

And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now!

(Student 1 stands and confronts Student 4.)

Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again

That late thou gav'st 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!

(Student 1 presents one end of the fabric to Student 4, challenging him to a fight.)

STU. 4 (T).

Thou wretched boy, that didst consort him here,
Shalt with him hence!

(He grabs one end of the fabric.)

STU. 1 (R).

This shall determine that!

(They start a tug-of-war. Then with a scream, Student 1 runs to Student 4 and strangles him to death with the fabric. Once finished, Student 1 remains paralyzed kneeling over Student 4's body. Student 3 begins a slow, steady march. Student 2 tries to rouse Student 1, who cannot move.)

STU. 2 (B).

Romeo, away, be gone,

The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain!

Stand not amaz'd. The Prince will doom thee death

If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

STU. 1 (R).

O, I am fortune's fool.

STOP

(Student 2 grabs Student 1 and pushes him off.)

STU. 2 (B).

Why dost thou stay?!

(All the Students form a clump as the Prince.)

ALL. *(In a round.)*

Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

(Student 2 [as Benvolio] breaks out of the formation and kneels, facing out front.)

STU. 2 (B).

O noble Prince, I can discover all

The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl.

There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,

That slew thy kinsman brave Mercutio.

(Student 3 [as Lady Capulet] breaks out of the formation and kneels, facing out front.)

STU. 3 (LC).

Tybalt, O my brother's child!

Prince, as thou art true,

For blood of ours shed blood of Montague!

STU. 1/4 (P).

Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

STU. 3 (LC).

He is a kinsman to the Montague!