ROMEO AND JULIET

by

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Edited by

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to accompany

**Negotiating Shakespeare's Language in *Romeo and Juliet*:
Reading Strategies from Criticism, Editing and the Theatre**

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THE NAMES OF THE PARTS

A list of actors first appears in Rowe, and one is also in Douai MS 1694.

Chorus
The Chorus can be one character or several. The textual position it occupies allies the play with classical Latin tragedy which also used choruses at the start and end of acts. The actor(s) of the Chorus may also be required to be mimes, providing tableaux of the action in the two speeches.

Prince Escalus
The Latinized name of the della Scala family who were rulers of Verona. The audience never hears the character called by name, although the text names him Prince Eskales at his first entrance (1.1.78.1). Levenson points out that two prominent sources (da Porto and Bandello) set the play in the time of Bartolomeo della Scala, and Painter calls the figure 'Bartholomew of Escales' (81).

Paris
A Count or 'County' (from the French 'Conté', equivalent to 'Earl', 3.4.12 and 21, in England), Paris is a kinsman of Escalus. In classical mythology Paris, the son of the Trojan King Priam, visited Meneleus' house in Sparta, and ran away with his wife Helen (of Troy), thus beginning the Trojan war. For an Elizabethan audience there would be an association with the Paris gardens, a district on the south bank of the Thames where bear-baiting, puppetry, archery and other leisure activities took place. The Paris Garden was owned by Lord Hunsdon, the patron of the company at the time of the printing of Q1. The herb 'paris' was known as the 'truelove' herb, recognised for faithfulness, or possibly, persistence (see S. Greer Fein 'Verona's Summer Flower: The "Virtues" of Herb Paris in Romeo and Juliet' *American Notes & Queries*, 8:4 (1995) 5).

Mercutio
A kinsman of Escalus, Mercutio also bears a classical name, relating him mythologically to Mercury, the god of news and messengers. A minor character in the source texts, the play develops the part substantially, and there is a possible connection with the figure of playwright Marlowe (see J. Porter, *Shakespeare's Mercutio*, Chapel Hill, 1988).

Montague Father
Da Porto first named the father of the young man in love as Montecchi after the political section feuding with the Cappelletti in Dante's *Purgatorio*, 6.106-8. Montague was the name of the Earl of Southampton's mother, and Southampton was Shakespeare's patron at the time he was writing. It may be this connection that encouraged some later productions to represent the Montagues as aristocracy and the Capulets as merchants.

Montague Mother
Romeo's mother is possibly referred to as *my lady* at 5.3.14, but this is a common term of respect rather than an attribution of aristocratic title.

Romeo
Florio defined 'romeo' as a 'roamer, a wanderer, a palmer', often taken interchangeably with 'pilgrim' in the Italian. But Blount's *Glossographia* (1656) distinguishes the two, saying that while the pilgrim has a 'dwelling place, The Palmer none . . . The Pilgrim might go at his own charge, the Palmer must be constant, till he hath obtained the Palm; that is victory over his ghostly enemies, and life, by death' (B43910383). Hence a 'romeo' finds victory only in death.

Benvolio
The name is from the Latin meaning 'good will'. Cousin to Romeo, he is nephew to Montague Father and Mother. The character is usually read, and acted, as a 'peace-maker' (3.1.1-4, 49-52), but can be played with interest against type (Mary Worth). The name is not in the source texts.

Abraham
A servant in the Montague household, the character is not named in the dialogue. The name is biblical as are those of many of the servants.

Balthazar
Romeo's 'man' or servant; the character is only named at 5.3.12(?). Romeo's 'man' may not be the same person as the second Montague servant, although the both parts can be acted by the same actor; however, Friar Lawrence is quite clear that he recognizes Romeo to have a specific servant (3.3.169) and Balthazar reminds the Friar that they know each other at 5.3.129. Balthazar was one of the three wise men who journeyed to Bethlehem to witness the birth of Christ, his gift being gold.

Capulet Father
The name 'Capulet' derives from Dante's 'Cappelletti' (see above Montague Father), and plays on the Latin *caput* = head. The role of Capulet Father is certainly accorded verbal characteristics associated with the head of the household, even to his abdication of these to prepare for Juliet's marriage to Paris (4.2.43). The Q2 text refers to him in the speech prefixes as 'lord', 'father' and 'old man', and this edition fixes on 'father' to foreground his position in the text anchoring the part the family plays in social order in the late Elizabethan period.

Capulet Mother
Referred to in the speech prefixes as 'Lady', 'Old Lady' and 'Mother', possibly depending on her social action at the time (see P. Werstine, 'McKerrow's "Suggestions" and W. W. Greg', in *Speech-Headings*, 11). This edition names her 'Capulet Mother' partly to make the point that she is not a member of the aristocracy as 'Lady Capulet' would imply, and to emphasize her family position without relegating her to 'Capulet Wife', while allowing the gendered distinction of her position in the family to underline the ambiguous combination of equity and inequality that the character occupies.

Juliet
Named 'Guilietta' in da Porto's novella, and 'Iulietta' by Painter, Shakespeare follows Brooke in shortening the name to 'Juliet'. Both 'Juliet' and 'Romeo' may be two- or three-syllable words.

Tybalt
The cousin to Juliet, and nephew to the Capulets, whose name is twice made the topic of Mercutio's word-play: at 2.4.19 and 76-7, where Mercutio extends the image of 'Prince of Cats', echoing Thomas Nashe, *Have with you to Saffron-Waldron* (1596), into *King of Cats* and Tybalt's *nine lives*, and at 3.1.74 where he refers to Tybalt as a *rat-catcher*. 'Tibert' was the name of the cat in *The History of Reynard the Fox* (1481).

Cousin Capulet
'Cousin' signifies 'kinsman'. The character is possibly 'mine Uncle Capulet' from the invitation to the feast (1.2.70).

Petruchio

A follower of Tybalt, the character is only named in the SD at 3.1.33.1. Williams, following a conjecture by Greg, assigns the part to Petruchio, Evans to 'A Follower'. Either way of course, the audience would never learn his name unless told by the programme: see 1.1.0.1-2n.

Nurse

A common practice in the Elizabethan period, as today, is to name servants by their function (for example, 'Cook'). As Juliet's wetnurse, the Nurse might well have come to be on close terms with her. The language of the part has much in common with the Nutrix in John Studeley's *Hippolytus* (*Seneca*) (1581), and is possibly the basis for the character of the 'Bawd' in Thomas Overburie, *Characters* (1615) which virtually reproduces the Nurse in the 'character' of the 'Maquerela, In Plain English, a Bawd': 'The burden of her song is like that of *Fryer Bacons* Head: *Time is, Time was, and Time is past*: in repeating which, she makes a wicked brazen face, and weepes in the Cup, to alay the heat of her *Aqua-vitae*. Her teeth are falne out . . .' (42). Either the type was easily recognizable during the period, or the character constructed by the actors who played the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* became well-known over the 20 years between the first stagings of the play and the publication of the 1615 edition of *Characters*. At the same time the part combines elements found in the presentation of women from Chaucer's Wife of Bath to the pantomime Dame: for example, the Nurse is widowed, widows having notorious reputations for sexual activity.

Peter

The Nurse's servant, but also more generally, a servant to the Capulets. Q2 names the accompanying servant in 1.2 as the 'Clown'. In 4.5 the role of the Clown and Peter are elided because the SDs say 'Enter Will Kemp', the company's clown at the time of printing, and the speech prefixes refer to him as Peter. See *LLL* and a similar assignation of Kemp's role as the 'Clown' to the character 'Costard' who also cannot read (4.2.80ff.); see also Jowett, *Romeo and Juliet*, 291, 1.2.0.1. 'Peter' is again a Biblical name, of Christ's disciple who betrayed him three times on the night before the resurrection (John, 18.17). As such the name signifies a man who is all too human. St Peter also guards the gates to the Christian heaven; see 2.5.19. The name 'Peter' may also have been associated with a hot-tempered man; compare the story of Saint Peter a few verses earlier in John, 18.10-11, although the text

characterizes Peter as anything but hot-tempered and so this may be a sly joke.

Sampson
The great and brave biblical warrior (Judges, 13-16), spelled as Samson in the Bible. A servant to the Capulets; the audience never hears his name.

Gregory
The name may refer to the warrior Pope Gregory VII (see J. Tobin, *N&Q*, 17, 1979, 154). He is named at 1.1.1 and 58, and is a servant to the Capulets.

Friar Lawrence
The Friar is called a Franciscan Friar at 5.2.1, a naming underlined by the reference to his colleague as a *barefoot brother* (5.2.5): because of their oath of poverty, Franciscans often didn't wear either shoes or sandals (*OED* a.). Franciscans were renowned for their lack of institutional structures, and in England were closely associated with the Reformation of the Roman Catholic church. All these indicators would have reassured the Elizabethan audience that this man was a 'good' man, a *holy man* (5.3.267). Lawrence is confessor to both the Montague and Capulet families: see 2.4.169.

Friar John
A Franciscan colleague of Friar Lawrence.

Three Musicians
The musicians are named after their instruments, Hugh Rebbick ('rebeck' = a three-stringed fiddle), Simon Catling ('catling' = cat-gut used for stringed instruments) and Simon Soundpost ('soundpost' = 'a small peg of wood fixed beneath the bridge of a [fiddle] serving as a support for the belly and as a connecting part between this and the back', *OED*).

Apothecary
An apothecary who has a run-down shop in Mantua. Italy was considered to be one of the most important centres for herbal knowledge, both as medicines and as poisons, in the Europe of the sixteenth century.

Chief Watchman
The Watch of a city or town were citizens hired to patrol the streets usually during the night, but also at times during the day. The text gives them additional powers as 'searchers' who were the equivalent in sixteenth-

century England to modern-day police, being officials in any organization responsible for making sure that the rules of that organization were carried out, whether it be a city, a guild or parish: see 5.2.8.

Pages
A page was usually a young man between the ages of 7 and 14, who was training for later life by living in the house of someone of similar, usually high, status to his own family and learning the rules of behaviour and service; still current but to fade during the seventeenth century.
Page at Capulets' Feast
Page to Mercutio
Page to Paris