Shakespeare’s Romeo & Juliet

—Reading Guide ACT 1—

# ACT 1, SCENE 1

`1. Lines 64-65 are our first introduction to Benvolio. What do these lines reveal about his character?

2. Our first impression of Tybalt occurs in lines 66-67. What do we learn about his character?

3. What is the prince’s new decree for Verona?

4. We then learn that Romeo is suffering from **Unrequited Love—loving someone who does not love back.** What suggestion does Benvolio make to Romeo to help him get over is unrequited love for Rosaline—lines 228-229? What do you think of this suggestion?

**ACT 1, SCENE 2**

1. In this scene Lord Capulet talks to Paris about marrying his daughter Juliet. What two reasons does he give for not wanting Juliet to marry at this time (lines 8-14)?

2. Look at lines 16-19. On what condition will Lord Capulet agree to Juliet’s marriage with Paris?

3. What does this reveal about Lord Capulet’s love for his daughter?

4. From the servant who cannot read, we learn that Rosaline, with whom Romeo believes he is in love, will be at the Capulet party. Why does this excite Benvolio? What is his plan (lines 85-90)?

5. Why does Romeo agree to go to the party?

**ACT 1, SCENE 3**1. What is the nurse’s relationship with Juliet?

2. How would you describe the nurse’s personality?

3. Read lines 61-62. What is the nurse’s one wish for Juliet and why?

4. When Lady Capulet asks Juliet how she feels about being married, what is Juliet’s answer (line 66), and what does it reveal about her character? How is her attitude about love different from Romeo’s?

 5. Read lines 97-99. Explain Juliet’s answer to her mother when asked if she can love Paris. What does it reveal about her knowledge of being in love? What is her attitude toward love and marriage?

**ACT 1, SCENE 4**

1. Read lines 106-111. Why does Romeo feel uneasy about going to the party?

2. What decision does Romeo make in lines 112-113, and what is the importance of this decision?

**ACT 1, SCENE 5**

1. We learn from Romeo’s **soliloquy** that he is struck by love at first sight when he sees Juliet at the party. Paraphrase Rome’s speech (lines 42-51). To what does he compare Juliet?

2. How does this speech about his love for Juliet compare to his speeches about being in love with Rosaline?

3. Tybalt recognizes Romeo’s voice and tries to start a fight. What two reasons does Lord Capulet give for stopping him (lines 63-72)?

4. Read lines 87-90. What threat does Tybalt make as he agrees to withdraw?