

Enriching the Humanities Through Opera

Roméo et Juliette / Romeo and Juliet

Title: Exploring Story Adaptation

Grade Level: 9-12th

Length: 45 minutes

Literary Work: *Romeo and Juliet* (William Shakespeare)

Opera: *Roméo et Juliette* (Charles Gounod, composer; Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, librettists)

Inquiry Question: What is story adaptation? How is it relevant to opera?

Lesson Focus: Students will use critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration while exploring the concept of story adaptation and how it relates to opera stories.

Prior Knowledge: Students have read *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare), have analyzed characters and can name the Who, What, When, Where, Story arc (Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution Ripple effects).

Materials: Copies of *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare), presentation slides (includes *Roméo et Juliette* short opera synopsis with photography and video examples), libretto excerpts of key scenes, opera synopsis handout, opera adaptation pitch worksheet, student laptops/tablets, interactive board, paper, and pens/pencils.

Key Vocabulary: Opera, composer, librettist, libretto, adaptation, key scene, and pitch.

Definitions

- **Opera:** A dramatic work set to music, with singers performing entire roles accompanied by an orchestra. It typically includes arias, duets, and ensembles, and is known for its elaborate costumes, sets, and vocal prowess.
- **Composer:** The person who writes the music for an opera, symphony, movie score, etc.
- **Librettist:** The person who writes the text of an opera.
- **Libretto:** The words or text of an opera.
- **Adaptation:** A creative work, such as a film, television show, play, or book, that is based on an existing story, such as a novel, short story, or historical event, and has been modified or reimagined to fit a different medium or audience. Adaptations often involve changes to the characters, setting, or other elements of the original story to make it more suitable for the new format.
- **Key Scene:** A pivotal moment in a story, play, or film that significantly impacts the narrative and characters. It is often a turning point that advances the plot, reveals important information, or changes the direction of the story.
- **Pitch:** A compelling summary of a proposed story idea that typically includes an overview of the plot, characters, setting, and themes of the story, as well as any

unique or marketable aspects that make it stand out. The goal of a story pitch is to persuade the recipient to greenlight the project or take further action.

Objective(s): At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Analyze an opera synopsis based on a literary work.
- Compare a literary work with the opera adaptation synopsis.
- Identify elements of adaptation across multiple versions of the same key scene present in the literary source and opera.
- Collaboratively brainstorm a pitch for an opera adaptation of the literary work.

Assessment: Groups present their opera pitches following the guidelines for adaptation.

Adaptation Guidelines:

- Who: character/character identity
Note: character identity can be adapted, but students may not eliminate or add characters.
- What: key scene, action in the story - what is happening?
- When: time period, time of day, year, etc.
- Where: location and setting

Assessment Rubric

4: Presentation is thorough and comprehensive, providing detailed and specific information on the Who, What, When, and Where. Pitch is highly detailed, insightful, and well-supported, demonstrating a deep understanding of the literary work and creative approach to the adaptation guidelines.

3: Presentation includes detailed information on the Who, What, When, and Where. Pitch is clear and well-developed, showing a strong understanding of the adaptation guidelines.

2: Presentation provides some detail on the Who, What, When, and Where. Pitch is somewhat clear but lacks depth and specificity. Basic knowledge of the literary work is present.

1: Presentation lacks specific and clear information on the Who, What, When, and Where. Pitch provided is vague, lacking depth, and knowledge of the literary work.

Learning Standards:

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.9-10.3: Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.9: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

National Core Arts Standards

TH:Cr2.I.a. Explore the function of history and culture in the development of a dramatic concept through a critical analysis of original ideas in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2-II.b. Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.I.c. Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2-I.a. Explore the function of history and culture in the development of a dramatic concept through a critical analysis of original ideas in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2-II.b. Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

TH:Re7.1.I.a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

TH:Re7.1.II.a. Demonstrate an understanding of multiple interpretations of artistic criteria and how each might be used to influence future artistic choices of a drama/theatre work.

Procedure:

Introduction/Hook (5 minutes):

- Begin with a word association exercise to spark students' interest and creativity.
 - Words: “opera,” “Romeo & Juliet,” and “adaptation.”
 - Ask students to write down the first word that comes to mind.
 - Students share their answers while the instructor writes down their responses on the board. Keep in mind any repeated words.
 - OR
 - Create a live Word Cloud with [Mentimeter](#).
 - Students can add their responses via their phones/computers/tablets (repeated words will increase in size.)

- Discuss findings.
- Define opera.
- Introduce the concept of adaptation and discuss its relevance in literature.

Main Narrative/Sequence (20 minutes):

- Review story arc of literary work (Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution).
 - Exposition: Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love at the Capulet's party.
 - Rising Action: Romeo and Juliet secretly marry despite their families' feud.
 - Climax: Romeo kills Tybalt in a duel and is banished from Verona.
 - Falling Action: Juliet fakes her death to be with Romeo, but the plan goes tragically wrong.
 - Resolution: Romeo and Juliet both die, leading to the reconciliation of their feuding families.
- Read through the full synopsis (see below) of the opera, *Roméo et Juliette*, as a class and discuss the fundamental elements of the story.
 - Conduct a “Turn and Talk” activity. (Students chat in pairs, or small groups)
 - Students compare the story structure of the opera with the original literary work.
 - Compare setting/time, historical context, point of view, narrative structure, etc.
- The instructor chooses one of three provided key scenes in the opera, sharing photo and video examples to enhance understanding.

Scene Selections (see below for summaries, libretto excerpts, and viewing options):

- Key Scene #1: Act I: Scene 1, No. 4 - Romeo and Juliet Meet
 - Key Scene #2: Act III: Scene 1, No. 10 - Meeting Friar Laurence
 - Key Scene #3: Act IV: Scene 2, No. 13 - Romeo kills Tybalt
- Ask and discuss questions such as, “why do we adapt stories?” “How does storytelling add relevance for an audience?”
 - Discuss the adaptation process for the chosen key scene, outlining guidelines for adaptation and pivotal considerations.
 - Discuss the ripple effects of making these changes.
 - Guidelines for adaptation:
 - Consider the Who, What, When, and Where.
 - Who: character/character identity
 - *Note: character identity can be adapted, but students should not eliminate or add characters.*
 - What: key scene, action in the story - what is happening?
 - When: time period, time of day, year, etc.
 - Where: location and setting
 - Students may use their prior knowledge of literary work and opera synopsis/libretto excerpts as resources.

- Together as a class, guide students through the adaptation process for the chosen key scene.

Activity/Practice (10 minutes):

- Students will work together to decide how they are going to adapt the opera, and brainstorm ideas for those changes based on the provided guidelines for adaptation: Who, What, When and Where. Each group will fill out an opera adaptation pitch worksheet.
 - Have students break out into groups and either adapt the same key scene viewed as a class or choose another key scene from the opera to brainstorm for an adaptation pitch.

Present/Share (8 minutes):

- Each group will present their pitch for an adaptation to the class, explaining their creative decisions and rationale.
- Encourage feedback and discussion from peers.

Reflection (2 minutes):

- Conclude the lesson with a recap of learnings about adaptation.
- Invite students to reflect on their collaborative work and share their thoughts on the adaptation process. Ask and discuss:
 - “How did your understanding of the story change as you adapted it?”
 - “Were there any new insights or perspectives that emerged?”

Extension/Follow-up/Next steps:

- Ask and discuss:
 - “Can this literary work and storyline be set in the present? Is it still relevant today? Why or why not?”
 - “Can adaptation work for historical events and figures? Why or why not?”
- Critical analysis of film adaptations compared with literary work and opera.
 - Review the same scenes in Baz Luhrman’s Rome + Juliette, which was set in a contemporary time.
 - What does the music in the movie do to impact the storytelling or mood? Does it match the musical feeling or tone of the scenes in the opera?

***Roméo et Juliette* (1867)**

Charles Gounod, composer; Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, librettists

Romeo and Juliet is a turducken of adaptation, an Italian poem, to an English poem, to a play, to an opera and more! Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is in itself an adaptation. Written circa 1594–6, *Romeo and Juliet* is Shakespeare's earliest tragedy other than the remarkably violent *Titus Andronicus*. For his source material, he turned to an earlier narrative poem by the English writer Arthur Brooke, "The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet" from 1562. Brooke in turn had been inspired by a story by the Italian poet Mateo Bandello—some of whose other tales made their way into Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*.

Gounod's librettists, Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, closely followed Shakespeare's text, often using direct translations of the original's expressions and metaphors. As a whole, the opera condenses the action of the play and focuses it more tightly on the story of the two lovers.

Short Synopsis

The opera *Roméo et Juliette*, based on Shakespeare's play, tells the story of Romeo and Juliet, two teenagers from the feuding Montague and Capulet families. They meet at a ball, fall in love, and secretly marry, knowing their families will never approve. After Romeo kills Juliet's cousin in a street fight, he is forced into hiding to escape the Capulets' vengeance. Meanwhile, Juliet fakes her own death to avoid an arranged marriage, but the plan goes tragically wrong. Within a few days, the drama culminates in the tragic deaths of both Romeo and Juliet.

ROMÉO ET JULIETTE SYNOPSIS

Charles Gounod, composer; Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, librettists

PROLOGUE

A chorus tells of an endless feud between two great families, the Montagues and the Capulets, and the young Roméo and Juliette, whose tragic love brought the feud to an end.

ACT I *Verona.*

A lavish masked ball is taking place at the Capulet palace. Tybalt, a Capulet gentleman, assures the wealthy Count Pâris that his cousin Juliette's beauty is beyond compare. When Juliette arrives, Lord Capulet presents his daughter to the guests. Roméo, a Montague, sneaks in with his friends Mercutio and Benvolio. Roméo is nervous about entering the Capulet residence: He has had a strange dream that he thinks may be a premonition of some great misfortune. Mercutio dismisses the dream as mere fancy, the work of the fairy Queen Mab. Soon, however, Roméo sees Juliette. He is instantly entranced. Juliette, meanwhile, knows that her father wants her to marry Pâris, and she confides in her nurse, Gertrude, that she has no interest in marriage. But when Juliette sees Roméo, she is deeply intrigued by this handsome stranger. They find a moment to speak alone. Although they are both shocked to discover that the other is a member of the rival family, they cannot deny their mutual attraction. Tybalt appears. Roméo puts on his mask to avoid being recognized and rushes off, but the proud, quarrelsome Tybalt has already recognized the intruder as Montague's son. He wishes to chase after Roméo, but Capulet restrains him, ordering the party to continue.

ACT II *Juliette's garden, that evening.*

Roméo enters the Capulets' garden looking for Juliette. When she appears on her balcony, he steps forward and declares his love. Servants briefly interrupt their encounter, but once they are alone again, they make plans for a secret wedding.

ACT III *Frère Laurent's church, dawn the following morning.*

Roméo comes to Frère Laurent's cell, followed shortly by Juliette and Gertrude. At first, Frère Laurent is shocked to see Montague and a Capulet together. But finally, convinced of the strength of their love, the priest agrees to marry them. He hopes that the union will end the fighting between their families.

A street in Verona.

Outside the Capulets' palace, Roméo's page, Stéphano, sings a song mocking the Capulets, provoking the Capulets to attack him. Mercutio intercedes to protect Stéphano, and soon the skirmish escalates into a violent swordfight between Mercutio and Tybalt. Just then, Roméo arrives on his way home from the church. He begs Tybalt and Mercutio to forget about the hatred between their families, but when Tybalt kills Mercutio, Roméo furiously stabs and kills him. The Duke of Verona arrives, with the Montagues and Capulets hot on his heels. Both of the families are outraged and demand justice—the Montagues for Mercutio, the Capulets for Tybalt. The Duke, for his part, is primarily concerned with preventing future skirmishes from destroying the city's peace.

He refuses to execute Roméo, but he does banish the young man from the city, declaring that if Roméo is seen again inside Verona's walls, he will die.

ACT IV *Juliette's bedroom, early the following morning.*

Roméo and Juliette have spent a secret wedding night together. She forgives him for killing Tybalt, and they promise to love each other forever. Then, as a lark outside the window announces the arrival of day, Roméo reluctantly leaves for his exile. Capulet enters and tells his daughter that she must marry Pâris that very day. She tries to argue with her father, but, unmoved by his daughter's tears, Capulet angrily tells his daughter to prepare for the wedding. Juliette is left alone with Frère Laurent, whom she desperately begs to help her. Although he is at first reluctant to meddle, Frère Laurent finally gives Juliette a sleeping potion that will make her appear dead. He promises to write a letter to Roméo explaining the potion and his plan to help Juliette avoid her marriage. The letter will also invite Roméo to return secretly to Verona; when Juliette awakens, Roméo will be by her side. Together, they will flee the city and embark on a new life. Juliette is terrified, but she drinks the potion. When Capulet and the guests arrive to lead Juliet to the chapel for her wedding, she collapses.

ACT V *The Capulets' family tomb.*

Despite Frère Laurent's careful planning, his letter has gone astray, and when news reaches Roméo of Juliette's burial, he believes that she is truly dead. Crazed with grief, Roméo arrives at the Capulet crypt carrying a bottle of deadly poison. He has no desire to continue living, and he drinks the poison. At that very moment, Juliette wakes up. She is overjoyed to see Roméo, and together the young lovers imagine a happy future. Just as they are about to leave the crypt, however, Roméo staggers and falls. With horror, Juliette realizes that he is dying. Drawing a dagger from Roméo's belt, Juliette stabs herself.

Synopsis courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera.

Key Scenes in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*

Video excerpts and timestamps are pulled from the Metropolitan Opera on Demand and PBS LearningMedia™. Performance Date: Jan. 21, 2017

KEY SCENE #1: Act I: Scene 1, No. 4 - Romeo and Juliet meet

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #15. ACT I: Ange adorable
00:00 – 04:43

OR

[PBS LearningMedia™](#): Roméo et Juliette | Act I | The Metropolitan Opera
32:21 – 37:04

Romeo and Juliet meet at the ball and are both captivated by each other. Romeo, being more experienced, tries to woo Juliet, while Juliet, who is more innocent, is intrigued by Romeo despite the conflict with her beliefs.

Libretto Excerpt

ROMÉO
Ange adorable,
Ma main coupable
Profane, en l'osant toucher,
La main divine
Dont j' imagine
Que nul n'a droit d'approcher!
Voilà, je pense,
La pénitence
Qu'il convient de m'imposer.
C'est que j'efface
L'indigne trace
De ma main par un baiser!

JULIETTE
Calmez vos craintes!
À ces étreintes
Du pèlerin prosterné,
Les saintes même,
Pourvu qu'il aime,
Ont d'avance pardonné;

ROMEO
Adorable angel,
my guilty hand
profanes, by daring to touch it,
the divine hand
which I imagine
no one has the right to approach!
Here, I think,
is the penance
proper to impose on me –
it is that I efface
the unworthy trace
of my hand by a kiss!

JULIET
Calm your fears!
These handclasplings
of the pilgrim on his knees
even the saints –
provided that he loves –
have pardoned in advance;

(Elle retire sa main.)

Mais à sa bouche
La main qu'il touche
Prudemment doit refuser
Cette caresse
Enchanteresse
Qu'il implore en un baiser!

ROMÉO

Les saintes ont pourtant une bouche
vermeille...

JULIETTE

Pour prier seulement!

ROMÉO

N'entendent-elles pas la voix qui leur
conseille
Un arrêt plus clément?

JULIETTE

Aux prières d'amour leur cœur reste
insensible,
Même en les exauçant!

ROMÉO

Exaucez donc mes vœux, et gardez
impassible
Votre front rougissant.
(Il baise la main de Juliette.)

JULIETTE *(souriant)*

Ah! Je n'ai pu m'en défendre!
J'ai pris le péché pour moi!

ROMÉO

Pour apaiser votre émoi,
Vous plaît-il de me le rendre?

(She withdraws her hand.)

but the hand that he touches
to his lips
ought prudently to refuse
that enchanting
caress
he implores in a kiss!

ROMEO

Yet the saints have rosy lips...

JULIET

Only for praying with!

ROMEO

Do they not hear the voice which counsels
them
a more merciful decree?

JULIET

Their hearts remain unmoved by the
prayers of love
even as they grant them.

ROMEO

Then do you grant mine and keep
unmoved
your blushing face.
(He kisses Juliet's hand.)

JULIET *(smiling)*

Ah! I could not help it!
I have taken the sin upon myself!

ROMEO

To allay your anxiety
would you like to give it back to me?

JULIETTE
Non! je l'ai pris! laissez-le moi!

ROMÉO
Vous l'avez pris! rendez-le moi!

JULIETTE
Non! je l'ai pris! laissez-le moi! *etc.*

ROMÉO
Vous l'avez pris! rendez-le moi! *etc.*

JULIET
No! I have taken it! Leave it with me!

ROMEO
You have taken it away! Give me back my
sin!

JULIET
No! I have taken it! Leave it with me! *etc.*

ROMEO
You have taken it away! Give me back my
sin! *etc.*

KEY SCENE #2: Act III: Scene 1, No. 10 - Meeting Friar Lawrence

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #27. ACT III: Mon père! Dieu vous garde!
00:00 – 03:32

OR

[PBS LearningMedia™](#) : Roméo et Juliette | Act III | The Metropolitan Opera
1:42 – 5:30

At the climax of the opera, a fierce street fight erupts between the two rival families. Romeo, desperate to stop the violence, pleads for peace, but neither side listens. During the chaos, Romeo's best friend, Mercutio, is killed by Juliet's cousin, Tybalt. Overcome with grief and rage, Romeo seeks revenge and kills Tybalt. This act seals Romeo's fate, deepening the Capulets' hatred for him and leading to his exile.

Libretto Excerpt

ROMÉO
Mon père! Dieu vous garde!

FRÈRE LAURENT
Eh ! quoi ! le jour à peine
Se lève, et le sommeil te fuit?
Quel transport vers moi te conduit?
Quel amoureux souci t'amène?

ROMEO
Father! God keep you! God keep you!

FRIAR LAURENCE
Eh, what's this! Day has scarce
dawned, and sleep eludes you?
What distemperature leads you to me?
What lover's care brings you?

ROMÉO
Vous l'avez deviné, mon père! c'est
l'amour!

FRÈRE LAURENT
L'amour! encor l'indigne Rosaline?

ROMÉO
Quel nom prononcez-vous?
Je ne le connais pas.
L'œil des élus s'ouvrant à la clarté divine
Se souvient-il encor des ombres d'ici-bas?
Aime-t-on Rosaline ayant vu Juliette?

FRÈRE LAURENT
Quoi? Juliette Capulet?
(Juliette paraît, suivie de Gertrude)

ROMÉO
La voici!

JULIETTE
(s'élançant dans les bras de Roméo)
Roméo!

ROMÉO
Mon âme t'appelait!
Je te vois! ma bouche est muette!

JULIETTE *(à Frère Laurent)*
Mon père, voici mon époux!
Vous connaissez ce cœur que je lui donne!
À son amour je m'abandonne,
Devant le ciel unissez-nous!

ROMEO
You have guessed right, Father, it is love!

FRIAR LAURENCE
Love! Still the unworthy Rosaline?

ROMEO
What name is this you utter?
I know it not!
Does the eye of the elect opening upon the
divine light still remember the shadows of
this earth?
Does one love Rosaline, having seen
Juliet?

FRIAR LAURENCE
What, Juliet Capulet?
(Juliet appears, followed by Gertrude.)

ROMEO
Here she is!

JULIET
(rushing into Romeo's arms)
Romeo!

ROMEO
My soul was calling you!
I see you! My mouth is dumb!

JULIET *(to Friar Laurence)*
Father, this is my bridegroom!
You know the heart I give to him!
To his love I surrender myself,
unite us before Heaven!

FRÈRE LAURENT

Oui! dussé-je affronter une aveugle colère,
Je vous prêterai mon secours.
Puisse de vos maisons la haine séculaire
S'éteindre en vos jeunes amours!

ROMÉO (*à Gertrude*)

Toi, veille au dehors!
(*Gertrude sort.*)

FRÈRE LAURENT

Témoin de vos promesses,
Gardien de vos tendresses,
Que le Seigneur soit avec vous!
À genoux! (*gravement*)
À genoux!

FRIAR LAURENCE

Ay, though I should face a blind rage
I will lend you my help.
May the ancient hatred between your
houses be extinguished in your young
love!

ROMEO (*to Gertrude*)

Do you keep watch without!
(*Gertrude goes out.*)

FRIAR LAURENCE

The witness of your promises,
the guardian of your love,
may the Lord be with you!
Kneel down! (*gravely*)
Kneel down!

KEY SCENE #3: Act IV: Scene 2, No. 13 - Romeo kills Tybalt

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #32. ACT III: Allons! tu ne me connais pas, Tybalt,
00:06 – 05:39

OR

[PBS LearningMedia™](#) : Roméo et Juliette | Act III | The Metropolitan Opera
19:32 – 25:04

The climax of the opera. In the midst of a street fight between the two rival families, Romeo tries to stop the fighting, but neither side respects his arguments for peace. In the fighting Romeo's best friend Mercutio is killed by Juliet's cousin Tybalt, and in an emotional rage Romeo kills Tybalt for revenge, thus sealing his fate of the Capulets hate for him and his exile.

Libretto Excerpt

ROMÉO (*contenu et digne*)

Allons... tu ne me connais pas,
Tybalt, et ton insulte est vaine!
J'ai dans le cœur des raisons de t'aimer

ROMEO (*restrained and dignified*)

Come now...you do not know me,
Tybalt, and your insult is useless!
I have in my heart reasons to love you

Qui, malgré moi, me viennent désarmer!
Je ne suis pas un lâche! Adieu!
(*Il fait un pas pour s'éloigner.*)

which despite myself come to disarm me!
I am no coward! Farewell!
(*He moves as though to go.*)

TYBALT
Tu crois peut-être
Obtenir le pardon de tes offenses, traître?

TYBALT
You think perhaps
to obtain pardon for your injuries, traitor?

ROMÉO
Je ne t'ai jamais offensé, Tybalt;
Des haines le temps est passé!

ROMEO
I have never injured you, Tybalt;
the time for hatred is past!

MERCUTIO
Tu souffrirais ce nom de lâche,
Ô Roméo! T'ai-je entendu?
Eh bien, donc! Si ton bras doit faillir à sa
tâche
C'est à moi désormais que l'honneur en est
dû!

MERCUTIO
Will you suffer this name of coward,
O Romeo? Did I hear you alright?
Very well then, if your arm is to fail in its
task
henceforward the honour belongs to me!

ROMÉO
Mercutio! – je t'en conjure!

ROMEO
Mercutio! – I entreat you!

MERCUTIO
Non! Je vengerai ton injure!
Misérable Tybalt! en garde,
et défends-toi!

MERCUTIO
No! I shall avenge your insult!
Tybalt, you rat-catcher, on guard and
defend yourself!

TYBALT
Je suis à toi!

TYBALT
I am for you!

ROMÉO
Écoute!

ROMEO
Listen to me!

MERCUTIO
Non! Laisse-moi!

MERCUTIO
No, let me be!

CHŒUR (*Montaigus*)
Bien sur ma foi!

CHORUS (*Montagues*)
Excellent, in faith!

(Capulets)

En lui j'ai foi!

STÉPHANO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO

Capulets! Capulets! race immonde!

Frémissez de terreur?

Et que l'enfer seconde

Sa haine et sa fureur!

ROMÉO

Haine, haine, en malheurs féconde!

Dois-tu toujours par ta fureur

Donner au monde

Un spectacle d'horreur?

TYBALT, PÂRIS, GRÉGORIO

Montaigus, Montaigus! race immonde!

Frémissez de terreur!

Et que l'enfer seconde

Ma/sa haine et ma/sa fureur!

CHŒUR

Capulets! Capulets! race immonde!

Montaigus! Montaigus! race immonde!

Frémissez de terreur!

Et que l'enfer seconde!

Sa haine et sa fureur i

(Tybalt et Mercutio croisent le fer.)

MERCUTIO

Ah! blessé!...

ROMÉO

Blessé!...

(Capulets)

I trust in him!

STEPHANO, BENVOLIO, MERCUTIO

Capulets! Capulets! Foul brood!

Shake with terror!

And may hell assist

his hatred and his fury!

ROMEO

Hatred, hatred fruitful in miseries!

Must you always through your fury

give to the world

a spectacle of horror?

TYBALT, PARIS, GREGORIO

Montagues! Montagues! Foul brood!

Shake with terror!

And may hell assist

my/his hatred and my/his fury!

CHORUS

Capulets! Capulets! Foul brood!

Montagues! Montagues! Foul brood!

Shake with terror!

And may hell assist

his hatred and his fury!

(Tybalt and Mercutio begin to fight.)

MERCUTIO

Ah! I am hurt!...

ROMEO

Hurt!...

MERCUTIO
Que le diable
Soit de vos deux maisons!
Pourquoi te jeter entre nous?

ROMÉO
Ô sort impitoyable!
(à ses amis)
Secourez-le!

MERCUTIO (*chancelant*)
Soutenez-moi!

(*On emporte Mercutio qui succombe.
Roméo, après l'avoir suivi des yeux
pendant quelques instants, redescend la
scène et, s'abandonnant tout entier à sa
rage, s'écrie.*)

ROMÉO
Ah! maintenant remonte au ciel, prudence
infâme!
Et toi, fureur à l'œil de flamme,
Sois de mon cœur l'unique loi!
(*tirant son épée*)
Tybalt! – Il n'est ici d'autre lâche que toi!
(*Ils croisent le fer.*)

ROMÉO
(à Tybalt, en lui portant un coup.)
À toi!
(*Tybalt est touché et chancelle : Capulet
entre en scène, court à lui et le soutient
dans ses bras. On cesse de se battre.*)

CAPULET
Grand Dieu! Tybalt!

MERCUTIO
A plague
o' both your houses!
Why came you between us?

ROMEO
O pitiless fate!
(*to his friends*)
Help him!

MERCUTIO (*staggering*)
Hold me up!

(*Mercutio is carried away, and dies.
Romeo, having gazed after him for a few
moments, comes back downstage and,
giving himself up wholly to his rage,
cries.*)

ROMEO
Ah! Now away back to heaven, infamous
caution!
And thou, fire-ey'd fury,
be my conduct now!
(*drawing his sword*)
Tybalt! – there's no other coward here but
you! (*They cross swords.*)

ROMEO
(*to Tybalt, as he thrusts at him.*)
For you!
(*Tybalt is hit and staggers; Capulet
enters, runs up to him and supports him
in his arms. The fighting stops.*)

CAPULET
Great God! Tybalt!

BENVOLIO (*à Roméo*)
Sa blessure est mortelle!
Fuis sans perdre un instant!

ROMÉO (*à part*)
Ah! qu'ai-je fait? Moi! fuir! maudit par elle!

BENVOLIO
C'est la mort qui t'attend!
ROMÉO (*avec désespoir*)
Qu'elle vienne donc! Je l'appelle!

TYBALT
(*à Capulet d'une voix expirante*)
Un dernier mot! et sur mon âme...
exaucez-moi!

CAPULET (*solemnement*)
Tu seras obéi, je t'en donne ma foi!
(*Une foule de bourgeois a envahi la scène.*)

CHŒUR
Qu'est-ce donc?
Qu'est-ce donc? c'est Tybalt!
Il meurt.

CAPULET (*à Tybalt*)
Reviens à toi!

BENVOLIO (*to Romeo*)
His wound is mortal!
Escape without losing a moment!

ROMEO (*aside*)
Ah, what have I done? I – to flee – cursed by her!

BENVOLIO
'Tis death that awaits you!
ROMEO (*in despair*)
Let it come, then, I summon it!

TYBALT
(*to Capulet, in a dying voice*)
One last word!...and upon your soul...fulfil my wishes!

CAPULET (*solemnly*)
You shall be obeyed. I give you my solemn word!
(*A crowd of townspeople have invaded the stage.*)

CHORUS
What's this then?
What's this then? – It's Tybalt!
He is dead.

CAPULET (*to Tybalt*)
Come to yourself!

Libretto excerpts courtesy of [DM's Opera Site](#).