Romeo & Juliet's Unofficial, Unnecessary Sequel

By Edward J. Thomas

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DEDICATION

To Bill Shakespeare, who inspired me at Romeo & Juliet's age, and to Ericka, who inspires me every day.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Not entirely happy with the way *Romeo & Juliet* ended, Prince Escalus decides that everything would've been better had the two famous lovers lived and the ending of Shakespeare's classic is rewritten. With Romeo and Juliet alive and their fathers agreeing to end their vicious feud, it appears that we finally have a happy ending. Preparations are made for the couple to renew their vows in front of both families to cement the new peace… Will they live happily ever after, or will the fickleness of being a teenager – coupled with Romeo's knack for getting those around him killed – ruin this famous relationship? All the questions you've never asked are answered here!

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

Originally titled *If They Had Lived (The Unofficial, Unnecessary, Unasked-For, Long-Awaited Sequel to Romeo & Juliet)*, it was first presented on November 19, 2009 at Lamphere High School in Madison Heights, MI and directed by Samantha Glover.

The roles were originated by the following cast: Romeo: Jared Seymour; Juliet: Rebekah Mitton; Prince Escalus: Nicholas Luce; Benvolio: Brad Leonard; Rosaline: Gabrielle Davis; Lord Montague: Jeremy Hunacek; Lord Capulet: Trevor Mier; Lady Capulet: Jessica Seymour; Paris: Anthony Clemons; Friar Laurence: Jason Geist; Blanche: Samantha Henning; Balthasar: Justin Dyer; Nurse: Jesi Stoddard; Carmella: Chelsea Miller; Page: Chris Jones; Prince's Handmaiden: Dinah Nasari

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 m, 6 w, 1 flexible, optional extras)

ROMEO: The moody teenage son of the Montagues, and Juliet's husband. Shows Juliet how much he loves her every chance he gets.

JULIET: The teenage daughter of the Capulets, and Romeo's wife. A bit more down-to-earth than Romeo.

PRINCE ESCALUS: The arrogant, narcissistic ruler of Verona. Credits himself for bringing an end to the Montague-Capulet feud.

BENVOLIO: Romeo's cousin and best friend. An unintentional charmer.

ROSALINE: Cousin to Juliet and her best friend. Beautiful and, despite her reputation, boy-crazy.

LORD MONTAGUE: Romeo's father. Newly widowed and occasionally daft, his concerns are mainly for Romeo's wellbeing.

LORD CAPULET: Juliet's father. Seems to care more about his station than his daughter, but will defend his family's honor when necessary.

LADY CAPULET: Juliet's mother. The feud may be over, but she won't forget the damage Romeo caused her family.

PARIS: The ghost of Juliet's suitor, recently killed by Romeo. And he's holding onto that grudge.

FRIAR LAURENCE: *(Flexible role)* The friar that married Romeo and Juliet.

BLANCHE: A friend and kin to Juliet. Open with her friends, but shy around boys.

BALTHASAR: Romeo's faithful servant from Mantua. His fear for his life clashes with his faithfulness.

NURSE: Juliet's faithful nurse. She sees Juliet as the daughter she never had, and tends to reminisce about Juliet's upbringing.

CARMELLA: Lord Capulet's unmarried cousin.

PAGE: Romeo's gopher.

(Continued next page)

CAST - continued

Optional: It is allowable to add a small number of PRINCE'S HANDMAIDENS to the cast, who would be there to tend to the Prince *(get his chair, feed him grapes, hold up his hand mirror, etc.)*. This gives the director the option to cast more women and perhaps add a few bits of his/her own, so long as no lines are added and it does not detract from the play.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I
Scene 1: The Capulet tomb, late Thursday night.
Scene 2: Juliet's bedroom, the next day.
Scene 3: Montague's dining room, the following Tuesday.
Scene 4: A public place in Verona, the next day.

ACT II
Scene 1: Montague's dining room, the next day.
Scene 2: A public place in Verona, later that day.
Scene 3: Capulet's tea room, two days later.
Scene 4: Capulet's orchard, three days later.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

For additional humor directors may wish to add the following stage action which was incorporated in the premiere production. When it came time in Act II to change between the tea party (Scene 3) and the wedding (Scene 4), one of Romeo's notes was invariably still on the ground when Lord Capulet entered. Instead of ignoring it or trying to nonchalantly kick it away, he picked it up, and in a very confused way tried to read the text LOL as Rosaline did as "Lahl."

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: The stage is dark, except for a SPOT on the side of the apron. Into this light steps the PRINCE, and he spreads his arms in greeting as he addresses the audience.)

PRINCE: *(To audience.)* Greetings, friends! And welcome those of you who are merely acquaintances and not yet friends. I am Prince Escalus, and I oversee all of my subjects here in fair Verona. And there certainly has been a lot to oversee here. I'm sure you are at least partially familiar with some of the happenings in our city, particularly those concerning the long-running feud between the Montagues and Capulets. A feud I'm proud to say I helped end, but not before two star-crossed young lovers, one from each family, met their untimely demise. This is what I am here to discuss with you, so if you will allow me … or even if you don't, since I make the rules around here … I will now inform you exactly how their ends came to be, in case you're unfamiliar or your memories need refreshing. For those of you who know exactly what happened and wish I would just get on with it, you will still have to wait through this.

As I stated, there was a long-running, bloody feud between the Montague and Capulet families. It got so bad that small arguments in public places became riots that involved not only the members of the two families and their servants, but also common townspeople, many of whom were tired of the entire affair and wished they'd just kill each other and be done with it. I, personally, refused to stand for such public displays of violence and the disruptions they caused. So I declared that henceforth there would be peace on Verona's streets, under penalty of death. Hey, I don't mess around.

I suppose this might've made Romeo, son of Lord and Lady Montague, feel somewhat safer attending a party Lord Capulet threw which Romeo and his kinsmen were accidentally invited to. He went to the party in hopes of seeing the young woman he loved; a girl who didn't know he existed. And yes, you've guessed correctly. That girl's name was Rosaline.

PRINCE: *(Cont'd.)* Okay, some of you guessed correctly. But don't dwell on Rosaline, for while searching for her, Romeo spied the young daughter of Lord and Lady Capulet, Juliet. All thoughts of Rosaline immediately flew from his mind at the sight of this new love interest. Ah, teenagers. It was love at first sight, and it was mutual. Neither of them knew that Juliet's father had already promised her to a young man named Paris, although Juliet knew Paris was interested. You'd think Lord Capulet would've informed her that she was engaged. Perhaps he was saving it as a present for her fourteenth birthday, which was just over a fortnight away.

Anyway, Romeo snuck into the Capulet orchard later that night to declare his love for Juliet, and together they gave us several lines that would later become clichés. Quite sappy, these two. They met again in secret the next day with Friar Laurence, who married them. But the wedded bliss was short-lived. A few hours after this secret marriage, Juliet's cousin Tybalt was looking to make Romeo pay for sneaking into the party. And by "pay" I don't mean that he was upset that Romeo had skipped out on the cover charge.

Tybalt instead found Mercutio in a public place and fought with him. Romeo attempted to play peacekeeper, and while he did manage to hold Mercutio's blade back, Tybalt slipped his sword in and killed Romeo's friend. Tybalt fled at first, but returned to confront Romeo. My guess is that he figured he was a dead man anyway once I found out what had happened, so he may as well hit his original target. It didn't work out quite how he'd hoped, and he fell to Romeo's blade.

As expected, I was all set to deliver a death sentence to Tybalt for disturbing the peace. But since the job was done for me, I instead banished Romeo from Verona. My reasoning was that Romeo didn't start it, so he didn't deserve to die. However, he was responsible for the blood of a Capulet on our streets, so he did deserve punishment. Yes, I'm tough but fair.

Well, naturally Juliet was deeply saddened. She'd lost a cousin, her husband was banished, and she had just been told about her engagement to Paris, with the wedding less than three days away. No, we don't believe in long engagements.

End of Freeview

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