

# Tragedy: A Comedy

A play by Asha Hartland (with tree puns from Bryn,  
and a dirty joke from my mother).

## Dramatis Personae

- Romeo, a rather shy young man who is not particularly good at talking to girls.
  - Macbeth, a rather outgoing young man who thinks he is excellent at talking to girls.
  - Hamlet, a rather flash young man who is actually not bad at talking to girls (about himself).
    - Juliet, a rather modern young woman who knows her own mind.
    - The Nurse, a rather confused old woman (really?) who is losing her mind.
    - Father Lawrence, a rather deaf old priest who has other things on his mind.
    - Tybalt, a rather angry young man who knows what he wants (Juliet).
  - Mercutio, a rather loyal young man who knows what Romeo wants (also Juliet).
  - Montagues 1&2, two rather ordinary young men who know what they want (nothing to do with this).
  - Rosencrantz & Guildenstern, two more rather ordinary young men who know what they want (equality).
    - Ophelia, a rather sweet young woman who's a little bit crazy in love.
    - Lady Macbeth, a rather forceful young woman who's just a little bit crazy.
    - Banquo, a rather dead young fellow who just wants to have a good time.
  - Old Hamlet, a rather insubstantial old king who **knows** how to have a good time.
    - Prospero, a rather clever old man who loves his trees.
    - Some trees, rather leafy personages who love the taste of blood.
- And
- Shakespeare, a rather clever young bard who loves the sound of his own voice.
  - Marlowe, a rather bitter young playwright who wishes Shakespeare'd keep his mouth shut.

## Act 1

### Scene 0.5

*Enter Shakespeare, strumming some suitable period instrument.*

**Shakespeare:** Welcome, welcome, to this, the first performance of this wonderful play – and it is rather wonderful, if I do say so myself. I'm Will, Will Shakespeare. Please allow me to introduce Tragedy, my latest play-

**Marlowe:** (*standing up in audience?*) YOUR play?! Why, you ungrateful –

**Shakespeare:** Pipe down, Marlowe. Whose name is on this thing? Oh yeah, not yours. As I was saying, please do enjoy this lovely production of Tragedy: A Comedy.

We lay our scene in Oxford city  
Where love strikes men from dignity  
And consequences dreadful shall arise  
When each upon the same girl lays his eyes.  
Though Scot and Dane already are attached  
They both attempt to make a better match;  
While Montague, the young and shy  
Makes Juliet the apple of his eye.  
Through quarrels, death and ghosts and stuff  
Will true love prove to be enough?  
Never was there such a tale of woe,  
As this of Juliet, and Macbeth, and Hamlet, and Romeo.

*Exit Shakespeare.*

## Scene 1

*Romeo, Macbeth, Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Mercutio stroll on, bantering.*

**Rosencrantz:** And then *I* said, it's not just my *thumb* I'll be biting if you don't shut up.

*(All laugh- Guildenstern takes a few seconds to get it)*

**Macbeth:** So, Romey Romey Romeo, what about that girl you've been seeing? What's her name? Rosalind?

**Romeo:** *(going all shy)* W-what about her?

**Macbeth:** Oh, come on. It's been days! *(exaggeratingly Shakespearean)* Hath the fair lady cut down her wall of thorns?

**Hamlet:** Hast seen the wonders of her fairy casket?

*(All chuckle and nudge each other)*

**Rosencrantz:** Canst claim to have roamed her sweet-bottom grass?

**Guildenstern:** Yeah, you got any yet?

*(All stare at Guildenstern with annoyance. Macbeth cuffs him round the head.)*

**Macbeth:** Honestly, Guilders. You're... really something.

**Guildenstern:** Aww, thanks!

**Hamlet:** ANYway... Don't you slink off, Romeo! We want to hear all about your fair lady. Is her waist so very slender, and her means so very great? (*lascivious eyebrow waggle, gestures, etc*)

**Romeo:** (*getting excited and dramatic*) Oh, and fair she is! Her eyes contain every sparkle of the dew-fed morn, and her lips were placed and curved and painted by the very angels. Her hair – oh, her hair –

**Mercutio:** Alright, poet boy. We know all that. You've been spouting that nonsense since the beginning of the week! Have you actually spoken to her yet?

**Romeo:** Yes! Of course! I... I... No. (*sad face*)

(*Catcalls and jeering from the boys.*)

**Macbeth:** You're such a wet codfish. How are you ever going to get a girl to fancy you when you clam up like an oyster at the merest glance? You're nearly 20! At your age, I had girls everywhere panting after me. And now, I've got one of the hottest girls in the country in my bed – she's CRAZY for me!

**Hamlet:** Yeah, my girl's MAD about me too... Her and half the population of Oxford! Good lookin' guy like you, Romey, you should have them falling at your feet. In fact... (*whispers to Macbeth*) Tonight, we're getting you a girl!

(*All yay! While yay-ing, Banquo comes and holds a dagger in front of Macbeth, luring him to one side*)

**Macbeth:** Is this that bloody dagger again? Come on, dagger, let's get a hold of you! (*he snatches at it*) Dammit. I missed. Guys, can you see this dagger?

**All:** I don't see a dagger, etc

**Macbeth:** There it is!

**Hamlet:** Ignore him, he's mad. So, what kind of girl are we looking for?

**Romeo:** But I – I – Rosalind! I don't want any other girl! She's the only one for m-

(*Juliet walks on with a handful of parchment flyers; Romeo's mouth drops open*)

**Juliet:** Hi there, boys. Got any plans for tonight?

**Macbeth:** *(snatching at dagger)* Be with you in a minute, I'm just a tad busy.

**All:** NO!

**Juliet:** Great! I'm having a party – you should come along. It's going to be so boring if I have to dance with my cousin AGAIN. And there's bound to be a few no-shows – Cardenio never turns up...

**All:** Various noises of agreement.

*(Romeo is standing, totally awestruck, basically just drooling over Juliet. She comes to give them each an invitation, and he stands there with his hand out, eyes glazed over. She attempts to make it stay in his hand, and ends up tucking it into his shirt or something)*

**Romeo:** Hnnnn...

*(Juliet leaves)*

**Rosencrantz:** Wow.

**Guildenstern:** Ooh... Pretty.

**Macbeth:** I'm going to assume from that reaction that she was reasonably attractive... Hey Romeo! That was a handy plot device that'll save us dragging you out to Wahoo again tonight. *(In a Gaston voice)* That's the girl you're going to marry!

*(Romeo is still making goldfish faces and bu-bu-bu noises)*

**Hamlet:** *(jealously)* Who says a beautiful girl like that's going to fall for *that*? I rather fancy her for myself...

**Mercutio:** Hey, he can woo her face off, Daneboy! Don't you touch her! Come on, Romeo!

**Romeo:** ...So... Beautiful... Woo... Woo...

*(Mercutio and Macbeth drag a still stunned Romeo off one way, and Hamlet, R&G storm off another)*

## Scene 2

*Juliet is standing on a balcony/box.*

**Nurse:** (*bustling in*) Cooey, Juliet! What are you doing back there? That *gorgeous* cousin of yours wants to dance with you – I do love a guy who fills out his codpiece like that! Come back inside, you silly girl, or I might just have a go myself!

**Juliet:** In a second, Nursey... (*to herself*) Sigh, I wish...

**Nurse:** What do you wish, my little peachkin?

**Juliet:** I wish it wasn't *only* Tybalt who wanted to dance with me. All those men, all those *tights*, and nobody wants to dance with sad little Juliet, too young to even stay up after midnight. I'm 17! I should at least have a boyfriend! And I just have to smile and be sweet (*she begins to cry*) like – nothing's – wrong...

**Nurse:** Oh, sweetie, oh my little kitty-dish, oh Juliet, don't cry! *I* think you're beautiful, and so do all those men out there. They just haven't... noticed you yet. Now, I bet some wonderful guy is gonna pop right along tonight and sweep you off your feet! Or maybe even two. Or maybe three! You know what they say about men, don't you?

**Juliet:** They're stupid, they smell and they like to pretend they know everything?

**Nurse:** You really need to stop listening to your cousin Kate. No, no, what they say, is that they're like carriages: you wait for ages, and then one comes along, and it's all plushy and the footmen are handsome and there're golden twiddly bits over the doors and it's the best carriage you could possibly have hoped for... and there's neverending wine! And a basket of kittens! (*witters while Juliet talks, clearly losing the plot*)

**Juliet:** Nursey? What does that have to do with men..?

**Nursey:** And it's led by unicorns! And the unicorns never get tired! And they sing Greensleeves while they trot along... (*wanders off humming*)

**Juliet:** Nursey? Oh, forget it. Much use she is. Sigh, I'll never find a man.

*(Enter Romeo (dressed up), Macbeth, Mercutio and two other Montagues – but Juliet doesn't spot them yet. Macbeth keeps looking over his shoulder.)*

**Macbeth:** Umm, guys? Have those trees always been there?

**Romeo:** *(nervously)* Never mind that! What about me and Juliet? How do I get her to like me?

**Mercutio:** It's easy. All you have to remember is- choose the lead casket.

**Montague 1:** No, no, you have to get someone to go out with her sister, first!

**Montague 2:** My cousin Ferdinand always says, see if her dad wants any jobs doing round the house.

**Montague 1:** Or you could always just lend her your hanky...

**Romeo:** By the gods! There she is!

*(He ducks behind a conveniently placed bush)*

**Macbeth:** Romeo, you pribbling flap-dragon – what on earth are you doing?

**Romeo:** Shh! She might notice us!

**Mercutio:** Well, it is her party.

**Montague 1:** Hang on... Her? Isn't that Juliet Capulet? As in, the daughter of the boss's mortal enemy?

**Montague 2:** I'm not sure I like this. We could be splenened if we get caught in there!

*(Both duck behind the bush, gibbering)*

**Mercutio:** Am I surrounded by lily-livered fools? All we've got to do is get into the party, avoid being recognised by any of the vicious Capulets, find the beautiful and presumably very well protected daughter of the guy who wants to kill us all, get her talking to Romeo... rely on his skills to pull her... and get out of there... We don't really need our spleens, right... guys?

*(He ducks behind the bush)*

**Macbeth:** By my beard, why am I the only one with any nerve around here? Get out of that bush right now, you poltroons!

*(While desperately trying to pull the others out of the bush, Macbeth himself gets pulled into it. Lots of sprawling and rumpus)*

**All:** OW! Get off! Etc

*(Juliet is drawn from her thoughts by this noise and finally notices the boys)*

**Juliet:** Er, gentlemen? Gentlemen?

*(The boys, still tussling, totally ignore her, except Romeo, who goes completely still and looks terrified)*

**Juliet:** Well. The rudeness of some people. (shouts) Gentlemen! Get out of the greenery! This is not behaviour that I would expect from people invited to one of the most prestigious parties of the year!

**Macbeth:** Yeah yeah, love, we heard you... *(disentangling himself)* Honestly, Romeo, we go to all this trouble to get you a girl... You're a perfectly attractive young man – well, a bit feeble, perhaps, and your hair's a bit silly... but there's no reason why you can't go in there and charm – *(He catches sight of Juliet for the first time. He is totally awestruck and blinks a few times, but recovers and coughs to cover up his surprise. While this is happening, the others disentangle themselves, and Romeo stands up a lot squarer than before.)*

**Juliet:** *(aside)* Oh, by all the saints, you are a dim lot.

**Romeo:** Yeah... Yeah! You're right, Mac! I really think I can do this!

**Macbeth:** *(very quickly)*...Actually, Romey, I think she's probably waaaay out of your league. I wouldn't even try, she'll just knock you back. No, best go back to Rosalind. At least you don't know that she *won't* have you – but this girl's a lost cause, my fellow. In fact, I've even heard she's going to *Cambridge*.

**Romeo:** Hah! You are a pigeon-egg, my friend – no need for all that reverse psychology, I'm going to get her! *(calls to Juliet)* O bright angel, how you do shine and put the very sun to shame.

**Mercutio:** Atta boy!

**Romeo:** I am entranced, I am intrigued, I am enslaved. Your beauty is a light to blind me, your very gaze strips me of my fear and I am reborn in your service, my beautiful lady.

**Montague 1:** *(nudging M2)* He's not bad, once he gets going...

**Juliet:** Oh, tell me more, handsome youth!

**Romeo:** Your hair is a fine gossamer cloth bejewelled with every star, your eyes are bluer than the first bluebell of spring, your knees...

**Macbeth:** *(Clears throat and steps in front of Romeo, proclaiming)* Yes, yes, that's enough of that now, Romeo. You don't want to make a fool of yourself in front of this beautiful lady – and how

beautiful she is! If you don't mind me asking, fair maiden, did it hurt when you fell from heaven?

**Juliet:** Er... What?

**Macbeth:** For surely, you are an angel! And your father, is he a thief?

**Juliet:** Umm... no, he's Lord Capulet...

**Macbeth:** Then how did he steal the light from the stars to put in your eyes? Hey! Is that a mirror in your pocket?

**Juliet:** No... you know your friend over there? Let's let him finish talking, yeah?

**Macbeth:** *(Kind of shocked but acting cool)*...Err, right. Okay, gorgeous, I shall call upon you tomorrow and we can finish our little chat. I find myself no longer in the mood to party. I'll see you in my dreams... *(He leaves)*

**Mercutio:** Well, what are we doing hanging about out here, when there's fun to be had inside! Anon, my lady. *(whispers)* Good luck Romey – I'll get you a drink!

*(they exit, except Romeo, who looks panicked at being left alone.)*

**Juliet:** So, my poetic friend, what else do you have up your sleeve?

Song! 'I know I barely know you but I think it might be love'

**Juliet:** But... I don't even know your name!

**Romeo:** It's Romeo. Romeo Gregory John Montague. Um, you probably didn't want to know my middle names.

**Juliet:** Your middle names? Oh, I wish I had never heard your last name! Middle names are insignificant beside the dread that strikes me to find out you are a Montague, kin of my father's enemy!

**Romeo:** Ohhh... *those* Capulets...

**Juliet:** Yes, *those* Capulets, you fool! Oh, what am I to do? Daddy will kill me if he finds out. Blast him and his feuds! Why are the sons of mortal enemies always so attractive? Oh, stay away from me, Romeo! *(she runs inside)*

**Romeo:** Oh, my Juliet! Don't go! *(exit)*



### Scene 3

*Three mad old professors stroll on to really dramatic music – can we do dry ice?*

**Witch 1:** When shall we three meet again?

**Witch 2:** At the Turf, about half past eight?

*They all nod and walk off.*

### Scene 4

*(Enter Macbeth (lol Martin). A strange old man is sitting looking intently at an old book. There are two trees behind him. They rustle and act like trees.)*

**Macbeth:** Professor Prospero! I need some advice.

**Prospero:** Oh, must you interrupt? I'm just about to try this new spell. Here, give me your head!  
*(Confused, Macbeth does so. Prospero pulls out some of his hair and puts it in a vial.)*  
Bibbity-bobbity-boo *(or other magical sounding words)*

**Macbeth:** Ow...Did anything happen?

**Prospero:** Oh, it'll take a little while to show, an hour or so? I'm trying to make those trees grow a bit faster. Now, what did you want?

**Macbeth:** I need to know what to do about a rather delicate situation. I've fallen in love – but I think she prefers weedy Romeo. How do I win her? Is there a spell you can give me?

**Prospero:** Don't be silly. Magic is for serious things. *(Macbeth raises his eyebrows at trees)* You just have to arrange it so that Romeo... is taken out of the running, shall we say.

**Macbeth:** And what about Hamlet? He's after her too!

**Prospero:** Easy. Just do the same. Think of how to get him out of the way, and then you can win Juliet's heart!

**Macbeth:** Hang on, I didn't tell you her name...

**Prospero:** I know a lot of things. Now begone. I'm busy! *(he turns back to his book and Macbeth leaves)*

## Scene 5

*(Inside the Capulet Party, a few hours later. Montagues 1&2 are dancing away on one side of the stage. Tybalt and Juliet are talking, while Romeo watches enviously from the sidelines, and Mercutio tries to get him to dance. It's clear from her body language that Juliet wants to get away. Tybalt's a creep!)*

**Tybalt:** So, baaaayby, are you enjoying the party? You're awfully quiet, *(touches her arm)* and ever so tense... Maybe a massage? I've got terribly *(crack)* dextrous *(crack)* hands. *(spins her and begins to give her a creepy massage)*

**Juliet:** NonothankyouTybalt!mfine! I'm... uh *(drains glass)* I need another drink. Would you be so kind?

**Tybalt:** Uh, sure, babe. An-y-thing you like.

*(As he leaves, Romeo rushes over to Juliet)*

**Romeo:** Oh Juliet, I can't stand this. Watching him with his hands all over you, drooling like some hideous beast – I can't bear it! Come away with me!

**Juliet:** I can't, oh, I can't! I wish I could, but you don't understand... You have to forget about me- find another girl. Quick, he's coming back! Duck!

*(Romeo ducks. Tybalt comes back and slides an arm around Juliet.)*

**Romeo:** *(incredulously)* DUCK? How does that help??

**Tybalt:** What's this, down here? A spilt drink? A discarded cocktail sausage? Get up, you beetle-headed hedgepig!

**Romeo:** *(haughtily)* I am tying my shoelaces, thank you very much. *(Less haughtily)* I've finished now. *(Stalks off to sit in corner again.)*

**Tybalt:** Well who was that impertinent lout?

*(Hamlet enters, flanked by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)*

**Hamlet:** Don't ask who that was, ask who *this* is! The name's Hamlet, Prince Hamlet, pleased to

meet you. This is Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but you can focus on me.

**Juliet:** Ah, you were with the boys earlier.

**Hamlet:** Yes... I suppose they are more like boys in comparison to *my* manly physique! And I can tell that you're all woman... fancy a dance?

**Juliet:** Yes, okay... why not? Hold this, will you, dear cos?

*(They move off to dance)*

**Rosencrantz:** *(patting Tybalt on the shoulder)* I wouldn't worry too much, there're plenty of nice girls at this party. I'd let Hamlet pick first though, he usually gets what he wants.

**Guildenstern:** Yeah, and looks like he wants your girlfriend, hurhur.

*(Tybalt stands dumbfounded for a few seconds, getting angrier, until suddenly he bursts)*

**Tybalt:** RIGHT! I, Tybalt, Prince of Cats, hereby lay claim to Juliet Capulet as *my* girl. Anybody who wishes to challenge me over this can duel me, right here, right now!

**Juliet:** I am *not* –

**Hamlet:** I accept your challenge. My girl here wants a man who knows what he's doing.

**Juliet:** And I most certainly am not –

**Hamlet:** Oh, feisty. I like a bit of spunk in a girl. Name your weapons, Tibbles, Pussy Prince.

**Tybalt:** Bodies and minds only. No weapons except rhythm.

**All:** Gasp! A dance-off!

**Romeo:** Oh no! I can never claim her now! You've seen me dance, Mercutio, it's just not pretty... Even if I did win, Juliet would never love me again.

**Mercutio:** Do not fear, dear Romeo; I'll for you to battle go. Hey, that rhymes! Must be a good sign. (shouts) Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you dance?

**Tybalt:** What do you want with me?

**Mercutio:** I, too, stake my claim on Juliet.

**Tybalt:** And who do you *claim* to be?

**Mercutio:** Why, I claim to be none other than Mercutio, loyal servant and good friend to Romeo, who does love this lady truly and more so than either of you.

**Tybalt:** Then my fight is not with you, good man, but with your friend. Let him face me.

**Mercutio:** He shall not. He fears to humiliate you too badly with his skills, and so, from respect, allows me to claim the fight. Will you duel?

**Tybalt:** I am for you. And you too, Hamlet! Anyone else? No? Then let's begin.

*(DEATH BY MACARENA.)*

**Romeo:** Mercutio! Are you hurt?

**Mercutio:** It's nothing, just a scratch... well, maybe a little more. 'Tis enough. Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man. A pox on your dancing ability, and your foolhardy heart! *(He dies)*

**Romeo:** Mercutio, you're scaring me! Mercutio! Wake up, you silly goat-bladder. Come on! No!

**Montague 2:** He's dead, my lord.

**Montague 1:** We'll take him home.

*(They drag Mercutio off. Tybalt groans)*

**Romeo:** He died for me, my oldest friend. Where's Tybalt, that murderer? Which way did he go?

**Juliet:** He has not left, but lies here, killed with the same thrust which took Mercutio's life. Oh Romeo!

**Romeo:** My love, I grieve for your loss, if not for the Prince of Cats himself. Your cousin and my best friend, dead. This is a sad day.

**Hamlet:** Now hold on one second! Who gave you permission to touch my girl like that? Your hands cannot do what mine can... Comfort, that is. Let go of her! I have won her!

**Romeo:** You fell at the first hurdle!

**Hamlet:** But I am the only dancer left alive, therefore I am the winner. Your dancer's dead. The girl is mine.

**Juliet:** I will not be yours! It's Romeo I love, and I don't care who knows it!

**Hamlet:** Oh, forget that weed. No girl can refuse what I have to offer... You'll be very, very happy with me. I'll make plans tomorrow- we shall be married within a week!

*(Exit Hamlet.)*

**Juliet:** Oh, what am I to do? Nurse? Nurse?

*(Juliet runs off)*

**Romeo:** Juliet! Oh Mercutio, if ever I needed you... How can I save my love? Aha! We must be married before that rascal Hamlet can arrange a wedding!

*(Exit Romeo)*

## Scene 6

*(Mercutio wanders in, looking lost)*

**Mercutio:** Hello? Hello?

**Banquo:** (offstage) Helloooooooooooooooooo...

**Mercutio:** Who's there?!

**King:** (offstage on other side) Theeerrrrreeee....

*(The two ghosts enter from either side and creep up on a terrified Mercutio)*

**Banquo and King:** Boo!

*(Mercutio screams and the two ghosts fall about laughing)*

**Mercutio:** What's going on? Where am I? Actually, who am I? I can't remember who I am!

**King:** You're dead.

**Mercutio:** I'm dead?

**Banquo:** Cor, slow one we've got here... Yes, you're dead. You're a ghost.

**Mercutio:** I'm a ghost? All, wooo and bumps-in-the-night and walking through walls?

*(He attempts to walk into a wall and fails.)*

**Banquo:** Well, not exactly. You can go wooo if you like, though.

**King:** Yeah, that's kinda fun for the first few years... Wooooo....

**Mercutio:** Wait - years? How long have I got to be a ghost for?

**King:** Till you've sorted out whatever it is that's keeping you on earth. There's some task left unfinished, some friend unsaved, some bit of history unfiddled with – that's why you're not all the way dead yet.

**Mercutio:** Right... So what do I have to do?

**Banquo:** Well WE don't know, do we? If we knew what we had to do, we'd have done it.

**Mercutio:** I suppose... Then how do we know?

**King:** You'll work it out... you'll remember. Till then, you can have a bit of fun scaring people! Stick with us, we'll show you the ropes. Come on.

*(They exit, wooing.)*

## Scene 7

*(Father Lawrence is pottering round the church. Romeo comes bursting in, very excitedly.)*

**Romeo:** Father, father! I have wonderful and terrible news!

**Father Lawrence:** Romeo, my boy! How nice to see you! But what do I want with elephant shrews?

**Romeo:** Terrible news, Father! Well, wonderful news... *(shouts)* I'm getting married!

**Father Lawrence:** That's lovely, lovely. And you wish me to marry you?

**Romeo:** Well, that's what I'd hoped.

**Father Lawrence:** Of course, of course. Bring me your bride on Monday, and we'll sort you two out, all married and sorted and done and dusted. Lovely.

**Romeo:** But Father, there is one problem.

**Father Lawrence:** A goblin? You can't marry a goblin!

**Romeo:** A PROBLEM! This must be a secret marriage, and fast. There are those who would keep us apart.

**Father Lawrence:** Do not worry, my child. I will not speak a word to anyone. In that case, tell her to be here in two hours, and I shall marry you.

**Romeo :** *(running off)* Thank you!

**Father Lawrence:** Wait! What's her name?

**Romeo:** *(from offstage)* Juliet!

**Father Lawrence:** Bother these ears! Harriet? Bernadette? Oh, no matter. Fiddle-di-di, twiddle-di-do... Lovely news. What a lovely day it is for a snooze.... *(he settles down into a chair and starts to snooze. Before long there is a knock. Macbeth comes in.)*

**Macbeth:** Hello? Hello? Father Lawrence?

*(He has to get up close and shout in the man's ear before he is heard. Father Lawrence awakes with a start, mumbling and grumbling.)*

**Father Lawrence:** Ah, Macbeth! What a surprise!

**Macbeth:** Well, I did knock. But no matter, I have some very exciting news for you...

**Father Lawrence:** News, you say?

**Macbeth:** Yes, of a wedding.

**Father Lawrence:** A what? A breading?

**Macbeth:** A WEDDING!

**Father Lawrence:** Oh, lovely. A lovely wedding. That makes a lot more sense. Ah, wonderful,

you're finally settling down.

**Macbeth:** Uh, no. Not me – my friend. You know Romeo, Father?

**Father Lawrence:** You know a foamy old pastor who's getting married? Quite unusual...

**Macbeth:** ROMEO. Romeo Montague. He wants to get married.

**Father Lawrence:** Lovely, lovely. Yes, yes, he told me all about it just now. Nice lad.

**Macbeth:** Yes, I suppose he is. Only trouble is, he wants to marry one of our other friends.

**Father Lawrence:** And you like this young lady?

**Macbeth:** See, that's the thing. He's a man.

**Father Lawrence:** Well, yes. Now that you mention it, so he is. Manly old Romeo. Good on him. But who is the young lady in question?

**Macbeth:** No, there *is* no young lady. It's a man!

**Father Lawrence:** The young lady is a man?

**Macbeth:** Yes! Well, no. There's no young lady in the whole thing. Romeo wishes to marry Hamlet. Prince of Denmark. He's here as a Rhodes scholar.

**Father Lawrence:** Oh, Hamlet. I thought I misheard. Oh I see. Well... lovely. I wish them well. I'm to marry them in two hours. Hmm... I see now why the poor boy said there was a problem. Hmm... I can see the church not being too keen... How to make this look like a more, shall we say, traditional wedding?

**Macbeth:** Well, I was thinking about this on the way here. Couldn't, uh, *manly* Romeo be the bridegroom, and let Hamlet be the bride? And marry them under different names, so that all appeared... completely heterosexual? Under the veil, nobody could tell that Hamlet wasn't a rather... strong featured woman. Maybe Romeo could wear a small mask, too?

**Father Lawrence:** Why, yes... That's not a bad idea! You be off now, and tell Romeo and Hamlet that they shall be married as... Benedick and Beatrice. Those are nice names. I presume you shall be the best man?

**Macbeth:** Indeed. Goodbye, Father Lawrence! (*aside*) As they say, let the best man win... Now, off to tell the boys! (*He exits, laughing.*)



## Scene 8

*(Lady Macbeth & Ophelia walk on, arm in arm)*

**Lady Macbeth:** Have you seen much of your Hamlet recently, Ophelia my dear? Macbeth's been acting awfully strangely...

**Ophelia:** Not as strangely as Hamlet, I'll bet. Why, just this morning I found him rifling through my wardrobe, feeling all my dresses and holding them against him.

**Lady Macbeth:** How very peculiar. Still, I'm sure it's nothing. They'll be back to normal soon enough.

**Ophelia:** I suppose. Would you like some lunch?

**Lady Macbeth:** That'd be wonderful. Is there somewhere I can wash my hands?

**Ophelia:** Of course. There's a lovely little river just down here...

*(They exit)*

## Scene 9

*(Father Lawrence and Romeo are standing at the altar. Romeo keeps looking around nervously, waiting on Juliet – he and Lawrence exchange a few words quietly. Montagues 1&2 and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are attending the wedding. Meanwhile, Macbeth is dragging Hamlet, in a dress, towards the altar.)*

**Macbeth:** Come ON!

**Hamlet:** You know what? I'm really not happy about this whole dress business. I mean, I'll admit, it does wonderful things for my waist, and it's rather nice having a light breeze caress my thighs... and I do have an irresistible urge to spin... *(he does so)* BUT! Getting married in a dress seems... somehow wrong. I even *sound* less like a shining example of virility, and more like... like... like a girl!

**Macbeth:** Don't be such a dolt. Do you want to marry Juliet or not?

**Hamlet:** Of course I do! But will she want to marry me, if I can no longer outman any challenger?

Zounds, with her in those breeches, I might not even be man enough for HER!

**Macbeth:** (*aside*) She doesn't want to marry you anyway, you boorish...

**Hamlet:** What was that?

**Macbeth:** Oh, nothing. Now come on!

**Father Lawrence:** Ah, the... bride arrives! Shall I hum you in?

*(He begins to hum the Bridal March very tunelessly. Hamlet and Macbeth begin to walk up the aisle.)*

**Hamlet:** Anyway. I'm still not sure I can trust you. Shouldn't you be helping Romeo win Juliet, not me? I'm surprised you didn't want her for yourself.

**Macbeth:** Romeo and I, well, let's say we had our differences. And even if I did want Juliet, I think after that challenge, your claim is the strongest.

**Hamlet:** (*Looking a lot happier*) Hmm... okay. By my beard! There she is! What a sight. Those legs, free from the cruel covers of skirts... that arse!

**Macbeth:** Argh! Your beard!

*(He flips the veil over Hamlet's head as they arrive at the altar. Romeo grabs Macbeth and whispers urgently to him.)*

**Romeo:** Finally! I was beginning to think you were keeping her for yourself!

**Father Lawrence:** (*Clears his throat*) If we are ready to begin? Right then. Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to join these two in marriage...

*(Romeo reaches out to hold Hamlet's hand.)*

**Hamlet:** (*to Macbeth*) Gosh, for a noblewoman, her hands are very large...

**Father Lawrence:** Do you, Beatrice – that's you – take Benedick to be your lawful wedded wife?

**Hamlet:** I do.

**Romeo:** (*to Macbeth*) Hang on...

**Father Lawrence:** And do you, Benedick – that's you – take Beatrice to be your lawful wedded

wife?

**Romeo:** Uh, I do.

**Hamlet:** That voice...

**Macbeth:** Ummm... *(to both, if possible)* she's got a sore throat. A little hoarse, you know.

**Father Lawrence:** If anyone knows of any lawful impediment why you two should not be married –

**Macbeth:** Uh, I'm just going to go and check... a thing. A thing that I forgot. *(He scarpers.)*

**Father Lawrence:** I now pronounce you man and... uh... I pronounce you married. You may now kiss the... uh...each other.

*(They go to kiss-Romeo flips up Hamlet's veil.)*

**Hamlet and Romeo:** ARGH!

**Hamlet:** No no no! MACBETH! You told me Juliet would be – would be – *(he whips round, looking for Macbeth)* Where are you, you blaggart? *(he runs off)*

**Romeo:** *(Grabbing Father Lawrence by the shirt)* You deaf old coot! I said JUL-I-ET, not HAM-E-LET!

*(Father Lawrence babbles, apologising, while Romeo berates him. Romeo runs offstage in despair)*

**Montague 2:** Well, it seems as though some puckish mischief has taken place here.  
*(They get up to leave)*

**Father Lawrence:** Such foul language in the House of the Lord!

## Scene 8.5

**Marlowe:** *(heckling)* That's my line! I wrote that! I demand the proper credit!

**Shakespeare:** *(hissed)* Shut up, Marlowe!

**Marlowe:** Damned if I will. You're a play thief! Not one bit of this is original!

**Shakespeare:** Why you- Ladies and gentlemen, there will be a short pause in proceedings while I sort this... gentleman out. Please do entertain yourselves.

*(He chases Marlowe off stage.)*

## END OF ACT ONE

### Act 2

#### Scene 0

*(Enter Shakespeare, strumming, and Marlowe, trotting behind. Marlowe has a black eye. Shakespeare stands centre stage and addresses audience.)*

**Shakespeare:** Welcome back, thank you, thank you. Are we all seated? Then Act Two may begin. Prepare yourselves for more intrigue, ghosts, and young lovers...

**Marlowe:** And fairies!

**Shakespeare:** No, there aren't any fairies.

**Marlowe:** You cut my fairies??

**Shakespeare:** Oh, for goodness sake, Marlowe... This isn't your play! I'm beginning to wish I'd never asked you to proof-read it.

**Marlowe:** Proof-read it? I wrote the bloody thing! You've just changed the names, and used a thesaurus on some of the adjectives. I'm never working with you again!

**Shakespeare:** Good! *(to audience)* Now, as I was saying. Prepare yourselves for witches, deperate situations, and a whole host of forest that is not as it seems...

**Marlowe:** *(sarcastically)* Ooh, the forest! Totally believable! Call yourself a playwright. Bloody cheek. You'll be sorry one day, when Tamburlaine's the biggest thing in theatre and everyone's

forgotten your name. Hmph.

*(he flounces off)*

**Shakespeare:** Ignore him. On with the show! *(Exit)*

## Scene 1

*(Enter Banquo and Old Hamlet, with arms around Mercutio.)*

**King Hamlet:** Don't you worry, kid, we'll make a ghost out of you yet!

**Mercutio:** Um, I thought I was already a ghost? Woo, and all that?

**Banquo:** There's a lot more to it than that! You've got to consider props, and who to haunt, all the tricks of the trade, you know.

GHOST SONG – It's Always Fun With Chains

**Old Hamlet:** *(spoken)*

There's some things you need to know  
Lest your ghost-hood be so-so  
You can't simply float about doing nothing and lie low.

**Banquo:** *(spoken)*

You think it's only haunting attics?  
Well, that's just a little static  
So we'd rather turn our hand to the impressive and dramatic.

**Together:** *(sung)*

There are many ways to do it  
To be scary and cause shock  
Listen well, our young recru-it  
And you might just learn a lot

**Banquo:** For a sense of the macabre  
Severed arms are often fun

**Old Hamlet:** While I favour quiet glaring  
That'll really make them run!

**Banquo:** I quite like to have a dagger,  
Or appear with bloody stains...

**Old Hamlet:** Or why not rattle something?  
It's always fun with chains!

**Mercutio:** Can I scream and howl and shout?

**Banquo and Old Hamlet:** Not quite right, that's more a ghoul.

**Mercutio:** Can I throw odd things about?

**Old Hamlet:** If you want to look a fool!

**Mercutio:** Come on fellows, help me out!

**Banquo and Old Hamlet:** Do you think this is a school?

**Banquo:** You'll have to think a little harder  
If you want to be a pro.

**Mercutio:** You see, thinking's not my thing

I wish I could ask.... *(spoken/shouted)* Romeo! I've remembered! I need to find Romeo and help him win his love! To Oxford! Uh, which way is Oxford?

## Scene 2

*(Outside the church. Hamlet is shaking Macbeth by the lapels. Macbeth's nose is bleeding. Romeo enters from the other side, dragging Father Lawrence.)*

**Romeo:** There you are, you scoundrel! Never in all my days- I've half a mind to show you what happens when you mess with Romeo! I'm in the croquet team, you know!

**Father Lawrence:** Now, gentlemen, violence is not the answer.

**Romeo:** It most certainly is! *(moving closer to Father Lawrence and holding his fist up)* Now tell me, what are we going to do about this?

**Father Lawrence:** Well, you're legally married. Not a lot you can do.

**Macbeth:** Hah! Leaving me free to marry Juliet!

**Hamlet:** Shut it, Scotty. You can't marry Juliet if you're dead...

*(Enter Juliet, Lady Macbeth and Ophelia in wedding-style attire. They all speak almost at once.)*

**Juliet:** What on earth is going on here? Romeo, put Father Lawrence down at once!

**Lady Macbeth:** (*rushing to him and beating at Hamlet*) Oh, Macbeth, darling, are you okay? Get off him!

**Ophelia:** Hamlet! I'm shocked! I never would have expected this from you!

(*The boys separate and look sheepish.*)

**Juliet:** Really, what a bunch of buffoons you are, fighting on this glorious day! I hope your petty quarrels can be kept until after my love and I are joined forever. Father Lawrence, are we ready to begin? (*He takes no notice of her.*) Father!

**Father Lawrence:** (*obviously has heard her but pretends not to*) Oh, hm, what? No thank you, I don't drink.

**Juliet:** Let's *begin!* Come on Romeo, my love, let's get married!

(*Romeo stands like a rabbit in headlights, makes a funny noise and runs off*)

**Juliet:** Romeo! (*rounding on FL*) Where's he going?

**Father Lawrence:** You see, my dear, there's a small problem...

**Juliet:** Oh! He doesn't want to marry me after all, sob! And he was threatening you to get you to call the wedding off... Oh, it's just like Kate always said, you can't trust a man! (*she dissolves into tears*)

**Ophelia:** Oh, don't cry, sweetie. Hamlet, go and get that nasty boy and bring him back here.

**Hamlet:** Fat chance! I'm not going anywhere near him!

**Lady Macbeth:** Then you go, Macbeth, dear.

**Macbeth:** Nah, let him run, cowardly fool. Juliet's better off without him. (*Juliet wails*)

**Ophelia:** You poor thing, let's get you home. (*She leads Juliet off*) If only ice cream and reality TV had been invented...

**Father Lawrence:** But Juliet – you don't underst-

**Macbeth:** Shut up and get back here! Um, sorry, Father. No offence. It's just... better this way. For me.

**Father Lawrence:** Well, if we're all done getting married, I'm going back inside. Good day. *(exit)*

**Lady Macbeth:** *(slowly and seductively, cuddling up to Macbeth)* Seems a waste, *nobody* getting married... What do you think?

**Macbeth:** By the gods! That's a dreadful idea!

**Lady Macbeth:** But-but-why? Don't you love me?

**Macbeth:** ...Of course I do, honeykins. But I... don't want to get married with a bloody nose.

**Lady Macbeth:** Oh, you poor- do be more careful, you're bleeding on me! Look at that spot. Oh, I'll never get that out. *(walks off tutting)*

**Hamlet:** Done hiding behind your girlfriend, Macbeth? Then get ready for what's coming to you! *(he chases Macbeth off)*

### Scene 3

*(The three witches stroll on, cackling)*

**Witch 1:** Thrice the college cat hath mewed.

**Witch 2:** Thrice the Magdalen bell has tolled.

**Witch 3:** Student cries 'To the bar, 'tis time'

**Witch 1:** Round about the paper go,  
In the obscure references throw.  
Things that in the lectures told  
From the exam I withhold.  
But mentioned once in unknown book?  
Into the paper, take a look!

**All:** Double, double toil and trouble,  
This exam will burst their bubble.

**Witch 2:** They think that they shall get a first  
With study skills among the worst?  
Though they may work from dawn til dark,



I'll ask the artists 'What's a quark?'  
And make the scientists translate  
To Latin all that I dictate.

**All:** Double, double toil and trouble,  
This exam will burst their bubble.

**Witch 3:** One two-hour paper's not enough  
We'll give them six! That's not so tough –  
Prepare them for the world of work  
Where in the bar they cannot shirk.  
For twelve hours straight they must slave  
Though it may send them to their grave.

**All:** Double, double toil and trouble,  
This exam will burst their bubble.

*(Enter Romeo)*

**Romeo:** Hail, wyrd sisters. I come to seek your help.

**Witch 2:** Speak.

**Witch 3:** Demand.

**Witch 1:** We'll answer.

**Romeo:** It's a matter of the heart.

**Witch 3:** Unless it is a family crisis,

**Witch 1:** Or a serious illness,

**Witch 2:** Then you can't have an essay extension.

**Romeo:** Well, that's creepy. Do you always speak like that?

**Witch 1:** Speak.

**Witch 2:** Like.

**Witch 3:** What?

**Romeo:** Never mind. I don't want an essay extension! But it is a matter of family – I'm married! And a serious illness – I'm sick with love.

**Witch 1:** Then that's perfect.

**Witch 3:** Married and in love.

**Witch 2:** How sweet.

**Romeo:** No! I love Juliet, but am married to Hamlet. I'd do anything to resolve this situation!

**All witches:** Anything?

**Romeo:** Yes, anything.

**Witch 1:** Then we may help you.

**Witch 2:** But you must do something for us.

**Witch 3:** We will have a claim to your first born son.

*(All witches cackle)*

**Witch 1:** ...Why do we want that?

**Witch 3:** It's tradition! / I'm hungry! / BANTER!

*(Witches bicker)*

**Romeo:** My first-born son! *(aside)* Well, if they don't fix this, it doesn't look like I'm going to be having one... *(to witches)* Fine. If that's what it takes.

**Witch 2:** We have decided that we do not want that.

**Witch 3:** In fact, we want a gingerbread house.

**Witch 1:** No we don't! Don't you remember what happened to Drusilla – those nasty little children came along and burned her, just because they wanted her house!

**Witch 2:** I know! We want some ruby slippers!

*(The witches begin to squabble)*

**Romeo:** Uhh, ladies? Ladies...? Oh, you're useless. I give up. I'll think of something myself!

*(He leaves.)*

## Scene 3.5

**Marlowe:** So you won't have fairies, but you will have those ridiculous witches?

**Shakespeare:** Hey, witches sell! You people all like witches, right?

*(Audience may or may not respond. Hopefully they will.)*

**Shakespeare:** Exactly! You know what else always sells?

**Marlowe:** Sex?

**Shakespeare:** Don't be vulgar! This is why my plays are better than yours. Hmph. Now hush. It's time for the next scene.

## Scene 4

*(Macbeth runs on stage, panting and looking over his shoulder. Three trees are standing in the middle of the stage. Macbeth sinks down against one of the trees. He rests there for a while, while the trees whisper.)*

**Macbeth:** Prospero! Prospero! Where are you? Oh, blasted trees. I do so hate trees. There's more of them than before, too. Ugh, all rustly and creepy, make you think something's behind you when it's not.

*(Meanwhile, the trees have been bending forward to menace Macbeth. One of them taps him on the shoulder.)*

**Tree 1:** *(matter of factly)* I'd run now.

*(He does so, screaming. The trees chase him. Quite slowly. They're trees.)*

## Scene 5

*(Mercutio runs on with Banquo and Old Hamlet. He stops at one side of the stage.)*

**Mercutio:** There it is, Oxford.

**Banquo:** I think we should probably get a little closer, don't you? We can't help from out here!

**Old King:** Can you remember where Romeo lives?

**Mercutio:** I think so... One of the colleges... Hmm... I can't remember!

**Banquo:** Magdalen?

**Mercutio:** I don't think so...

**Old King:** St John's?

**Mercutio:** Yes! Oh, no...

**Old King:** Exeter?

**Banquo:** Christchurch?

**Old King:** Balliol!

**Banquo:** Trinity!

**Old King:** Brasenose?

**Mercutio:** No, no, no, no, no!

**Banquo:** *(whispers fearfully)* Not...Hilda's?

**Mercutio:** God no! Oh, I can't remember!

**Old King:** *(exasperated)* Are you sure he's even in Oxford, and not bloody Sodom or Gomorrah?

**Mercutio:** Sodom... rings a bell... Oh! Wadham! How did I forget?

**Old King:** Come on then, to Wadham! We don't have any time to waste!

**Banquo:** Sure we do. We're ghosts. We've got nothing but time.

*(They walk over to the other side of the stage and turn to watch the next scene.)*

## Scene 6

*(Romeo and Hamlet walk onto the stage with Montagues 1&2 and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)*

**Romeo:** Oh, this is dreadful.... *(he groans)*

**Hamlet:** Will you stop saying that! You're driving me crazy!

**Montague 1:** Ignore him, Romeo. He's just tense.

**Hamlet:** Tense? Tense? I'll give you tense! *(he advances on the Montagues, who cower behind each other)*

**Guildenstern:** Future...? *(Hamlet whips round and threatens him instead.)* No! Perfect! Future perfect!

**Hamlet:** Honestly. Clotpoles, the both of you.

**Rosencrantz:** But I haven't said a- *(Hamlet cuts him off with a fist.)*

**Romeo:** Look, I know this is a pretty terrible situation, but you don't have to hit everybody. Sigh, this is SO dreadful....

**Hamlet:** RIGHT!

*(As Hamlet rounds on Romeo and he ducks behind M1 &2, Macbeth runs on)*

**Romeo:** *(squeaks)* Fight him instead!

**Macbeth:** *(grabbing Romeo and panicking)* The trees! The trees!

**Rosencrantz:** What's he on about? He's barking!

**Montague 2:** Oh, I don't beleaf it.

**Macbeth:** Keep the trees away from me! Please!

**Hamlet:** What is going on, Macbeth?! Why are you in such a state?

**Macbeth:** I've been running since Scene 4! The trees!

**Montague 1:** Well, that's definitely some stamen-a!

**Montague 2:** Trees don't have stamen...

**Montague 1:** Well, I was branching out. Don't be so petal-ant about your puns.

**Romeo:** Macbeth! Calm down. What *about* the trees?

**Macbeth:** They want to eat me!

**Hamlet:** Not as much as I'd like to punch you...

*(The trees approach the way that Macbeth came.)*

**Tree 2:** Tree, tri, tro, trum.

**Tree 1:** I smell the blood of an Englishman.

**Tree 3:** Well, he's clearly not English, he's obviously Scotch.

**Tree 4:** But then it's too hard to find a rhym-otch.

**Tree 1:** Get him!!

*(There is a battle cry, the kind usually leading to a charge. But the trees advance slowly. They're trees.)*

**All Humans:** Run away! Run away! Run away! *(They do so.)*

**Mercutio:** Quick! We need to save Romeo from the trees! That must be why I'm still around. Don't worry Romeo, I'm on my way! *(He starts after the boys.)*

**Old King:** This way – it's quicker. *(He pulls Mercutio after him.)*

## Scene 7

*(Enter Prospero at a trot. Oberon is concealed on stage somehow)*

**Prospero:** Oh, blast it. Where are my trees? Trees aren't supposed to move! Foolish plants. I'm sure I left them here. Oberon, where are my trees?

*(Oberon leaps out. He speaks airily, as if he is only half listening.)*

**Oberon:** They've gone...

**Prospero:** I can see that. **WHY** have they gone?!

**Oberon:** They have been quickened.

**Prospero:** Yes, yes, I was trying to get them to grow faster.

**Oberon:** Did you give them the flesh of man?

**Prospero:** Just a bit of Macbeth's hair, to speed up the process... Oh bother. This is one of those spells where you really shouldn't do that, isn't it?

**Oberon:** Ah... You begin to see... The taste of man is pleasant...To the trees...

**Prospero:** Then what can I do? They'll eat Macbeth! They'll eat everyone! Oh dear, oh very dear... Oberon, you have to help me!

**Oberon:** But how fun, to watch the chaos?

**Prospero:** No! Not fun! I know you fairies don't care about us, but please, you have to fix this!

**Oberon:** If I do... You must give up your magic. You cause trouble.

**Prospero:** Anything.

*(The boys all run on stage (minus Rosencrantz and Guildenstern), followed quite closely by the trees, who've picked up their pace a bit (but not much, they're still trees. Various cries of help and panic.)*

**Oberon:** Such a shame, to waste such sport. Still...

*(He points at them dramatically and the trees stop still. The boys rush up to Prospero and collapse in front of him, all speaking at once.)*

**Macbeth:** Prospero! Your bloody trees-

**Hamlet:** Putting us all at risk, you imbecile-

**Romeo:** You and your magic! I mean, seriously, how dangerous-

**Montague 1:** Are they gone?

**Montague 2:** Are we dead?

**Oberon:** See, all is well. Give me your magic book. Goodbye Prospero.

**Prospero:** Goodbye, my King. *(Oberon leaves.)*

**Hamlet:** Has he gone mad? Who's he speaking to?

**Prospero:** Show some respect for the King of the Fairies! Tsh. He saves your skin, and you ignore him... How rude.

**Macbeth:** Prospero, did you really and truly stop those trees? They're not going to eat me?

**Prospero:** Trees are very peaceful... Totally safe. Now then, you lot. Out of here! You've completely messed up my garden. Honestly. Shoo! Shoo!

**Macbeth:** Can we put all this behind us, lads? I think you should give up on this Juliet girl for once and for all, she's caused too much trouble between us. In fact, come over tomorrow night. We'll have a banquet! And, I know one or two lawyers who might be able to get you out of this marriage...

*(They begin to leave. Marlowe stands up.)*

**Marlowe:** FAIRIES! YOU BLAGGARD! So you'll steal my ideas when it suits you?? For all your poncing and posing, you couldn't think of a better way to tie off your *numerous* plot ends than to butcher my beautiful, well-crafted fairy storyline and ram it in there just to solve everything with magic? *(in sarcastic voice)* "Oh dear, I appear to have written myself into a corner, boom, fairies, now Macbeth is off to marry Juliet and oh look Romeo and Hamlet aren't married anymore!" For shame.

**Shakespeare:** Sit down and be quiet, Marlowe! I would have used pirates, but everybody knows there are no pirates in Oxford. Don't be a fool. Fairies don't belong to you!

**Marlowe:** Pish and tosh. You aren't fit to call yourself a playwright. I won't sit here and watch another minute of this copycat, second rate drama! *(He flounces off. Shakespeare sits down,*



*rather disgruntledly.)*

*(Prospero is still pootling in the garden, rearranging the now-stationary trees and so forth. The ghosts run on.)*

**Mercutio:** I say, good sir, have you seen Romeo? *(No response from Prospero.)*

**Banquo:** *(To Old King)* Should we tell him that he can't see him?

**Prospero:** *(To himself)* Silly, silly trees. Can't chase young men, no no. That's bad. That's naughty.

**Mercutio:** Do you mean these trees, sir?

**Prospero:** Good job Oberon stopped you, yes. Can't have you eating my friends.

**Mercutio:** NO! We're too late! "All the time in the world", you said. Now I can't save Romeo!

**Old King:** But he's already been saved– it doesn't matter. Just be glad he's safe.

**Mercutio:** But don't you see? I haven't saved him, so I'm still a ghost. Now I have to wait for him to get into *more* trouble...

**Banquo:** Knowing our friends, it's not exactly going to take long. I mean, Macbeth just walks around and trouble flies to him!

**Old King:** And my boy Hamlet is a nightmare for getting into scrapes, especially in public where he can embarrass me...

**Mercutio:** Hang on... You're Hamlet's father? And you're Macbeth's friend? Oh come on. Seriously? You didn't think to tell me this? *(blank looks from the other ghosts)* DO YOU PAY NO ATTENTION?! They're all friends – they're all in Oxford – they must all be in trouble. We'd better follow them!

## Scene 8

*(Juliet is out on her balcony again, looking sad. Nurse comes out, holding a wedding dress)*

**Nurse:** Oh, Juliet, sweetypeetytweety pie, why aren't you in your wedding dress yet? We need to be at the church in half an hour!

**Juliet:** But Nurse, you know I don't want to marry Macbeth. I love Romeo.

**Nurse:** Rubbish. Macbeth's perfectly lovely – he's got so much charm, so much style. Why, he even asked me in the quaintest way if I was tired from running through his head all day! He's a lovely man, nice smile, rich, with a codpiece to rival poor departed Tybalt... Sniff... Anyway, that rubbishy stick Romeo has nothing on Macbeth. His buttocks aren't nearly as nice. No, marry Macbeth, my chickadee. He looks like he knows how to give a girl a Midsummer Night's Dream...

**Juliet:** But-

**Nurse:** No, no, I won't have it! What, be 18 and not married? You'll look ridiculous. You can't arrive at Cambridge without a husband – I hear those boys are terribly lascivious. Touch you as soon as look at you!

**Juliet:** But-

**Nurse:** No buts. Into your wedding dress! Come on!

*(They go off a short way and Nurse helps Juliet into her dress while on the other side of the stage, Macbeth comes into the church and taps Father Lawrence on the shoulder.)*

**Father Lawrence:** Oh! Ah! Macbeth! Goodness, is it two o'clock already? You sly fox you, I couldn't believe my ears this morning when you said you want to get married, after your refusal yesterday. Uh, I did hear you right, yes? Sometimes I **can't** believe my ears, you know. I think I might be going a little deaf.

**Macbeth:** Yes, I'm sure. Juliet and I are getting hitched. I arranged it all last night.

**Father Lawrence:** Now hang on two very small sugar lumps. Did you say Juliet? Isn't that the girl all the bother was about? I'm not doing this ceremony if I'm going to be bashed about like a displeasing knave!

**Macbeth:** Don't you worry Father, it's all sorted now. The fellows and I are as good friends as ever, and they've even agreed – sort of- to attend the wedding feast!

**Father Lawrence:** Well then. Lovely. Come along and I'll get you all tidied up while we wait for your bride. You can't get married looking like that! *(He drags a startled Romeo offstage.)*

**Juliet:** Nurse, I'm just going out for some fresh air. I shan't be long! *(walking off)* Time to take matters into my own hands. Someone like Prospero, maybe, or perhaps I could just explain to Father Lawrence...

*(She bumps into the witches, who have appeared somehow.)*

**Witch 1:** Are.

**Witch 2:** You

**Witch 3:** Juliet?

**Juliet:** Uh, yes. Who are you?

**Witch 1:** Juliet Capulet?

**Witch 3:** In love with Romeo?

**Witch 2:** About to marry Macbeth?

**Juliet:** Yes! That's me! How on earth did you know?

**Witch 3:** Never mind, girlie.

**Witch 2:** We are helping Romeo.

**Witch 1:** Which means helping you.

**Juliet:** Oh, thank you, thank you. Can you stop this awful wedding going ahead?

**Witch 1:** Take this potion.

**Witch 2:** Go to the church.

**Witch 3:** Die! *(lots of cackling)*

**Juliet:** No! I don't want to die!

**Witch 2:** You won't. You'll get better.

**Witch 1:** It will simply look as though you have.

**Witch 3:** And Macbeth can't marry a corpse!

**Juliet:** Oh, and then I can marry Romeo! Thank you! Thank you! *(she drains the potion and runs off)*

**Witch 3:** And remind Romeo! We want a shubbery! *(exit witches, squabbling)*

*(Romeo and Hamlet walk on past the witches as they walk off)*

**Romeo:** Jolly good of Macbeth to make good after all that.

**Hamlet:** Don't you mean jolly good of us to forgive him? And I don't see why we have to go to this stupid party of his. We're too damn early. I won't be able to make an entrance at all! No point in sending your lackeys ahead of us after all.

**Romeo:** Hamlet, don't you think it's a bit strange that this party should be in the Capulet family chapel? Hm, never mind. I'm looking forward to seeing Mac again! Hey, where are those guys who are always hanging around with you?

**Hamlet:** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead. Pirates got them.

**Romeo:** Pirates? Really? Seems... convenient...

**Hamlet:** Fine, I had them killed. They were SO annoying! Oi! What was that for?

*(Romeo looks confused. Banquo, the King and Mercutio have walked on behind them, and the King taps Hamlet on the shoulder. Banquo, ever brandishing a dagger, comes round to the front, but Mercutio hangs back. )*

**Hamlet:** Dad? Oh my god. What? How is this possible?

**Romeo:** Hey, I can see a dagger! Is this what Mac's always going on about? Come here, you!

**Old King:** My boy. You've grown into a man. Such a big, strong man. Why, you're nearly as tall as me!

**Hamlet:** Duh-duh-dad? Romeo, my dad's here. He's speaking to me. Romeo?

**Romeo:** There's nothing there, don't be a drophoot.

**Banquo:** Well, come on Mercutio! As you've proved, we don't have all day.

**Mercutio:** But I'm scared. What if he can't see me? He can't see you or the King!

**Banquo:** Because we're not his ghosts. You're his ghost. He'll see you.

**Mercutio:** But what if he's scared of **me**? I don't think I could bear seeing him run away.

**King:** Don't worry, Mercutio. Just speak to him.

**Hamlet:** Did you say Mercutio?

**Romeo:** ...No... Are you hearing things, Hamlet? Hearing things and seeing things. What a pair. Come on. Don't play with my feelings. You know I miss Mercutio.

*(Mercutio makes a small squeaking noise and throws his arms around Romeo. )*

**Romeo:** Ooh, I've gone all cold. Like there's a chill all wrapped around me. Squeezing a little bit too tight. Caressing my... Ooh! Stop that, Mercutio! Gasp – Mercutio?

**Mercutio:** Oh, Romeo. Oh, Romeo!

**Romeo:** Oh, Mercutio!

*(They continue to make puppy eyes at each other, until Banquo clears his throat.)*

**Mercutio:** Oh! Right. Romeo, I'm here to warn you about something.

**Romeo:** Am I in danger? What is it?

**Mercutio:** Oh, ah, well I don't know. I thought it was the trees, but then you didn't get eaten, and I was still here, so it clearly wasn't that. So... Just watch out? Watch out for something.

**Romeo:** By my beard, you're as useful as ever. But it's so nice to have you back! Oh Mercutio.

**Mercutio:** Oh Romeo...

**Banquo:** That's enough of that! Let's let these boys get on with their *lives*, and we'll just keep an eye on them.

*(Church music begins to play out.)*

**Hamlet:** We really are too early – the people before clearly aren't done. Hmph, so much for my entrance. Pah - I do hate weddings. Just means one more girl that won't be coming to see Little Hamlet... at least not tonight!

**Romeo:** No! Wedding bells coming from the chapel? The Capulet chapel? The Capulet chapel captured by the Capulets in the war? The Capulets whose only catch of the clutch is Juliet? My love? No! *(he runs off)*

**Hamlet:** Wait for me! *(follows)*

**The ghosts, in unison:** Be careful! *(they follow)*

## VERY NEARLY THE END OF ACT TWO

### Scene 9

*(Macbeth and Juliet are standing before the altar, Father Lawrence behind it. Nurse is playing bridesmaid, fiddling with Juliet's clothes. There is a low font somewhere out of the way on the stage.)*

**Father Lawrence:** I say, Macbeth, I think we should begin - I've got a rather urgent, uh, appointment with some of the choir at 6.

**Macbeth:** Hold your horses, Father, I want my boys to witness the very moment Juliet and I are joined forever. *(evil laugh)* They'll be so pleased.

**Romeo:** *(from offstage)* MACBETH!!

**Macbeth:** That's them now. Let's begin!

**Father Lawrence:** Shouldn't we-

**Macbeth:** No, no, let's get the boring bit out of the way. All they need to see is the important bit, *(to Juliet)* isn't that right, my love?

**Juliet:** *(sickeningly sweetly)* Whatever you say, honeybun.

**Father Lawrence:** Well then, lovely. Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to witness the marriage of Juliet and Macbeth. Gosh, this does get boring, saying the same thing everytime. Not nearly enough action or excitement.

**Macbeth:** FA-ther!

**Father Lawrence:** Yes, yes, don't worry, I'll get you married. Now where was I... Oh, yes. These two in marriage.

**Nurse:** Ooh, I do love a wedding – all good comedies end with a lovely wedding! All's well that ends well, that's what I say!

**Juliet:** (*clutching stomach*) Oh, I don't feel very well...

**Nurse:** Nonsense. It's just nerves. Listen to the Father so you know when to say 'I do', or I might just say it for you! And be careful of that font. It's very low. it was given to us by the dwarves...

**Father Lawrence:** Do you, Macbeth, take Juliet to be your lawfully wedded wife?

**Macbeth:** I do.

(*Romeo and Hamlet et al burst through the doors, panting*)

**Father Lawrence:** And do you, Juliet, take Macbeth to be your lawfully wedded husband?

**Romeo and Hamlet:** NO! JULIET!

**Father Lawrence:** Quiet at the back, please. You'll have your chance to do all that in a minute, don't you worry. Now, Juliet, this bit is up to you. Do you take Macbeth to be your lawfully wedded husband?

**Juliet:** I-

**Father Lawrence, Nurse and Macbeth:** Yes?

**Juliet:** I – I'm- (*She collapses onto the floor. Romeo rushes to her. Everybody talks over the ends of sentences.*)

**Nurse:** Oh, my little pettypuss! (*She turns on Macbeth*) You've killed her! What did you do? Take it back, take it back!

**Macbeth:** I assure you Madam, I have done nothing of the sort.

**Nurse:** (*rounding on Father Lawrence*) Then you! You killed her! Oh, poor little Juliet!

**Father Lawrence:** I killed her? No, no, that can't be right. Who'd like a nice cup of tea? We can talk this over. I'll get some tea.

**Romeo:** Why does everybody I love have to die? First Mercutio, then Juliet – (*sobs*)

**Mercutio:** He loves me? Did you hear that? He loves me!

**Old Hamlet:** Oh, do shut up.

**Hamlet:** But I didn't say anything, Dad! Macbeth, what's going on?

**Macbeth:** Don't ask me, she just- *(Romeo leaps up and holds a knife to his throat)*

**Romeo:** YOU KILLED HER!

**Macbeth:** No I never! I loved her!

**Romeo:** You bastard! I should have killed you days ago for even daring to think about my girl!

**Hamlet:** Uh, don't you mean my girl? You know, I did win her...

*(Romeo goes apeshit and kills Hamlet. Macbeth looks shocked and turns to run away, but is faced down by Montagues 1 and 2, who he kills. Nurse sneaks off and curls up in the corner.)*

**Romeo:** Oh, you're for it now, Macbeth. I'll have your eyes!

*(They fight back and forth, until Macbeth has Romeo pinned to the ground with his sword (woof).)*

**Macbeth:** You can't kill me! No man can kill me! Prospero told me so!

**Mercutio:** This is my chance to save Romeo!

*(He gets in close to Macbeth, then taps him on the shoulder.)*

**Mercutio:** Boo.

**Macbeth:** A ghost? Aww, are you trying to frighten me to death?

**Mercutio:** Nope, I'm going to kill you the traditional way. *(He stabs him.)*

*(Romeo gets himself out from under the corpse and hugs Mercutio.)*

**Mercutio:** Glad I could help you, Romey. I expect I'll probably fade out soon, now that I've saved your life. I – I don't want you to see that, so I'll go. Just remember, I love you. Come on, Banquo, King. Guys? *(he looks around, and sees Hamlet and Macbeth dead.)* Oh. They didn't save them. OW! I'm going, I can feel myself going. Goodbye, Romeo. *(He exits, woo-ing.)*

**Romeo:** No! Mercutio! I love you! Argh!

**Marlowe:** *(Running on)* Now hold on one minute! I thought ghosts couldn't touch those who weren't their humans!

**Shakespeare:** *(getting up from the audience and picking his way through the bodies on stage)*



Oh, back again, Marlowe? Why don't you just leave me *(he pokes Marlowe in the chest)* and my *(poke)* play *(poke)* alone *(poke)*?  
*(They begin to tussle, until Shakespeare stabs Marlowe in the stomach. Marlowe crumples and dies.)*

**Marlowe:** All I wanted was for people to love us. We would have been the greatest... greatest  
(cough) playwrights...

**Shakespeare:** Marlowe, how could I have been such a fool? I'll never write another play without you! I'll never write another word. Don't die! *(But he does. Shakespeare addresses the audience.)*  
He... he was a genius. He – I can't – I won't – MARLOOOOOWE! *(he stabs himself)*

*(Father Lawrence returns with a tea tray, and comes up behind Romeo.)*

**Father Lawrence:** My dear boy, won't you sit down and have some –ACK.

*(Romeo whirls round and stabs him.)*

**Romeo:** Ohmigod! Father Lawrence! I'm so sorry! Please don't die! I didn't mean-

**Father Lawrence:** Hush, dear boy. I've had a good life – I only wish I'd told my true love how I felt about her. Sigh, Prunella.

*(Nurse comes rushing over, pushing Romeo out of the way (he wanders off) and pulling FL towards her.)*

**Father Lawrence:** Ow.

**Nurse:** Lawrence, my love – you mean you loved me too? Ever since the first day I saw you, I've loved you, with your righteous ways, and your deep voice, and your little moustache! But come, let me hear you say it.

**Father Lawrence:** I love you, Prunella.

**Nurse:** And I you, Lawrence. *(They kiss, he sighs, and dies.)* My love! He's dead. Am I to live without him? Never. I'll join you, my love! *(She takes out a small knife and kills herself.)*

*(Lady Macbeth and Ophelia run in)*

**Lady Macbeth:** Macbeth? Are you in here? Are you getting married to that little bitch?

**Ophelia:** I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry!

**Lady Macbeth:** No, dear, I'm glad you told me. I'm going to kill him! Where are you, sweetie? See THIS dagger?

*(She sees Macbeth dead)*

**Lady Macbeth:** Agh! No, my love! I was only kidding, I really only meant to scare you. I love you! I don't care if you were seeing that girl! Come on, wake up!

**Ophelia:** Eleanor, Ellie, leave him, he's dead... Let's get you home.

**Lady Macbeth:** No! I'm going to stay here. I'm staying with my Mac. *(She stabs herself and dies on him.)*

**Ophelia:** Oh my God. I have to get away from here!

*(Ophelia begins to back away, but trips over Nursey, throwing her handful of flowers all over herself as she lands head first in the font and drowns.)*

*(Romeo sits by Juliet's body, pulls her into his lap, looks round at all the carnage and starts to cry.)*

**Romeo:** Juliet, oh, Juliet. How did this happen? All I wanted was for us to be happy... And to go to sleep every night, with you by my side. *(he lays down beside her.)* I will go to sleep with you now. Thus, with a kiss, I die. *(He stabs himself.)*

*(Juliet wakes up and finds Romeo slumped over her. She slowly looks around the rest of the stage, taking in the carnage. She looks terrified.)*

**Juliet:** Oh, bugger. *(Pause.)* Romeo? *(She kisses him)* Your lips are still warm – not long dead – oh, wait for me! *(she grabs the dagger and stabs herself.)*

*(All is silent for about two beats, then: )*

**Witch 1:** Romeo!

**Witch 2:** Romeo!

**Witch 3:** We've worked out what we want!

*(They see the bodies and stop.)*

**Witch 2:** Oh.

**Witch 3:** This is unexpected.

**Witch 1:** How will we get our [insert item] now?

**Witch 3:** ...You know what would be a really good idea?

**Witch 2:** Please, no more silly wishes.

**Witch 3:** Zombies!!

**Witch 1:** Noooo- Hey, wait a minute. That's a really good idea!

**Witch 2:** All the zombies we could possibly want!

*(They do some magic and make everybody into zombies. Then they can sing the lovely final song!)*

