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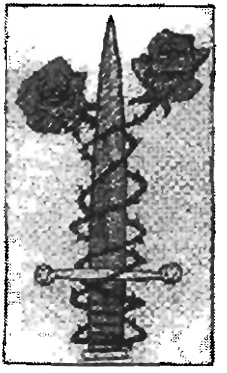
Dramatic Publishing

SIXTY-MINUTE SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO AND JULIET

by Cass Foster

SIXTY-MINUTE SHAKESPEARE



ROMEO AND JULIET

by Cass Foster

from ROMEO AND JULIET
by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

published by
Five Star Publications, Inc.
Chandler, Arizona

SIXTY-MINUTE SHAKESPEARE

ROMEO AND JULIET

by

Cass Foster

First Edition 1990. Second Edition 1997. Third Edition 1998.
Fourth Edition 2000. Fifth Edition 2001. Sixth Edition 2002.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616.
Romeo and Juliet (abridged) by Cass Foster—1st Ed.
p. cm. — (Classics for all ages) (The Sixty-Minute Shakespeare)
Summary: An abridged version of Shakespeare's famous love story,
in which an age-old rivalry between two feuding families leads to a tragic ending.

ISBN: 1-877749-38-9

1. Married people—Italy—Verona—Juvenile drama. 2. Children's plays, English. [1. Plays] 1. Shakespeare, William. 1564-1616. Romeo and Juliet. II. Title. III. Series.
PR283.A25 1997
822.3'3—dc21 97-28921
CIP
AC

Book Design by Barbara Kordesh
Paul M. Howey, Copy Editor
Sixth Edition edited by Gary E. Anderson

Five Star Publications, Incorporated
P.O. Box 6698
Chandler, AZ 85246-6698

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FAX: 480.940.8787
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E-MAIL: shakespeare@fivestarpublications.com

To
Cher Ber
YASDS

Welcome to
THE SIXTY-MINUTE SHAKESPEARE

Thanks to the progressive thinking of so many curriculum developers, Language Arts people and the splendid film work being done by directors such as Kenneth Branagh and Franco Zeffrelli, there has been a phenomenal growth in interest in Shakespeare.

No playwright, past or present, approaches the brilliance and magnitude of William Shakespeare. What other individual has even come close to understanding and then dramatizing the human condition? Just for the fun of it, I am listing (following these introductory remarks) a sample of themes and images so richly developed in the canon of his plays.

Shakespeare's characters are so well-rounded and beautifully constructed that it is common to see them as actual historical figures. When someone mentions Hamlet, Iago, Ophelia, or Puck, we immediately experience images and emotions that come from memories of people we know. We may feel compassion, frustration, sorrow, or pleasure.

As one of the wealthiest people of his times, Shakespeare earned his living as a playwright, theatre manager, actor, and shareholder in the Globe Theatre. He worked tirelessly to entertain. (Theatres presented a new play every day and the average new play had a total of only ten performances over an entire season.) He rebelled against the contemporary theatrical standards (the neo-classical principles that limited dramatic structure throughout France and Italy), he took plots from other published works (making them uniquely his own), and he created a spectacle (without the use of elaborate scenery) to captivate audiences of all social levels.

Imagine the challenge in quieting a crowd of three thousand in a theatre where vendors sell wine, beer, ale, nuts, and cards; where there is no intermission; where birds fly overhead; and where audience members stand near performers. Such was the setting in which Shakespeare's plays were originally staged.

The world's most familiar and successful wordsmith used language to skillfully create images, plot, and a sense of music and rhythm. The purpose behind this series is to reduce (not contemporize) the language. The unabridged Shakespeare simply isn't practical in all situations. Not all educators or directors have the luxury of time to explore the entire text. This is not intended to be a substitute for a thorough study of Shakespeare. It is merely a stepping stone.

I challenge each of you to go beyond the *Sixty-Minute* versions. Use the comfort, appreciation, and self-confidence you will gain to go further. Be proud of the insights and knowledge you acquire but do not be satisfied. The more you read, the more you gain.

May each of you be blessed with an abundance of good health and happiness. I thank you for your interest in our work and hope you are are pleased with what we have done.

May the Verse Be With You!

A COUPLE OF STAGING CONSIDERATIONS

Scenery

There are two excellent reasons theatres rarely use much scenery when staging Shakespeare. The first is related to the number of changes required. If we have to wait every five to ten minutes to watch scenery struck and set up, we end up watching a play about moving lumber. The second is because the audience will lose sight of what the play is about. Audiences need a couple minutes to adjust to the new scenic look of a dazzling waterfall and lush forest. By the time they take it all in and start paying attention to what the actors are saying, it is time to set up the next scene and the audience will be lost.

Location is normally established through dialogue and the use of a few simple props: a throne-like chair for the king's court, a long table with benches for an inn, or a bed for the queen's bed chamber. The key is to keep it simple.

Pacing

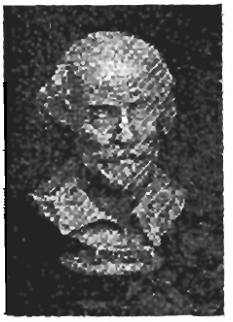
You will want to keep things moving all the time. That doesn't mean actors should talk and move quickly; it simply means one scene should flow smoothly to the next without delay or interruption.

As Scene One ends, the actors pick up their props and walk off. Actors for Scene Two enter from a different direction with their props and begin dialogue as soon as they enter the acting area, putting their props in place as they speak. Yes, the audience will still have view of the actors in the first scene, but they will gladly accept this convention if it means taking fifteen minutes off performance time.

TWO HIGHLY RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

www.ShakeSpirit.com

A revolutionary site offering Shakespeare gifts,
Teaching assistance, resources and quotes



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and the Performing and Visual Arts.

IMAGES AND THEMES TO LOOK FOR IN THE VARIOUS PLAYS

Mistaken identity
Wisdom of fools
Insanity
Greed and corruption
Religious persecution
The elements
The supernatural
Darkness and light
Loneliness or isolation
Anti-Semitism
Conspiracy
Revenge
Hypocrisy
Abandonment
Pride
Honor
Violence
Bravery
Rebellion
Savagery
Seduction
Disease or physical decay
Loyalty
War
Marriage
False accusations
Irresponsible power
Destiny or fate
Real or pretended madness
Ambition
Tyranny
Foils or opposites
Spying
Paranoia
Play-acting
Justice
Heavenly retribution
Forgiveness
Witchcraft
Mortality
Self-destruction
Black or white magic
Animals
Nature
Reality vs. illusion
Astrological influence
Characters reforming
Old age
Freedom
Usurping of power
Fertility Suppression
Sexual misadventure
Melancholy
Corrupt society
Love and/or friendship
Multiple meanings of words
Thought vs. action
Impetuous love
Role of women
Human frailty
Preparing for leadership
Charity/Betrayal

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1589 - 1591	Henry VI, Part 1, 2 and 3
1592 - 1593	Richard III
1593 - 1594	Titus Andronicus
1592 - 1594	Comedy of Errors
1593 - 1594	Taming of the Shrew
1594	The Two Gentlemen of Verona
1594 - 1595	Love's Labor's Lost
1594 - 1596	King John
1595	Richard II
1595 - 1596	A Midsummer Night's Dream
1595 - 1596	Romeo and Juliet
1596 - 1597	The Merchant of Venice
1597	The Merry Wives of Windsor
1597 - 1598	Henry IV, Part 1 and 2
1598 - 1599	Much Ado About Nothing
1599	Henry V
1599	Julius Caesar
1599	As You Like It
1600 - 1601	Hamlet
1601 - 1602	Twelfth Night
1601 - 1602	Troilus and Cressida
1602 - 1603	All's Well That Ends Well
1604	Measure for Measure
1604	Othello
1605	The Tragedy of King Lear
1606	Macbeth
1606 - 1607	Antony and Cleopatra
1607 - 1608	Timon of Athens
1607 - 1608	Pericles, Prince of Tyre
1607 - 1608	Coriolanus
1609- 1610	Cymbeline
1609 - 1610	The Winter's Tale
1611	The Tempest
1612 - 1613	Henry VIII
1613	Two Noble Kinsmen (Authorship in question)

23 April 1564 - 23 April 1616

"If we wish to know the force of human genius, we should read Shakespeare. If we wish to see the insignificance of human learning, we may study his commentators."

William Hazlitt (1778-1830) English Essayist. "On the Ignorance of the Learned," in *Edinburgh Magazine* (July 1818).

COMMON QUOTES FROM THE BARD

Romeo and Juliet

Parting is such sweet sorrow.
A plague o' both your houses.
O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Lord, what fools these mortals be.
The course of true love never did run smooth.
To say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days.

As You Like It

All that glisters is not gold.
Love is blind.
All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players.
For ever and a day.

Twelfth Night

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.
Out of the jaws of death.
O, had I but followed the arts!
Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage.

Henry IV, Part 1

The better part of valor is discretion.
To give the devil his due.
He hath eaten me out of house and home.

Henry VI, Part 2

Let's kill all the lawyers.

The Merry Wives of Windsor

Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.

Casablanca

This could be the start of a beautiful friendship.

Macbeth

Out, damned spot. Out, I say!
Screw your courage to the sticking place.

Hamlet

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
To be or not to be. That is the question.
The lady doth protest too much, methinks.
Good night, sweet prince, And flights of
angels sing thee to thy rest!

The Merchant of Venice

The devil can cite scriptures for his purpose.

Pericles

Few love to hear the sins they love to act.

Richard III

Now is the winter of our discontent.
Off with his head!
A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse.

Julius Caesar

Beware the ides of March.
Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.
It was Greek to me.

Much Ado About Nothing

The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a
bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.

Measure for Measure

The miserable have no other medicine but only hope.

Troilus and Cressida

To fear the worst oft cures the worse.

The Comedy of Errors

Unquiet meals make ill digestions.

Cast of Characters

Escalus, Prince of Verona
Paris, A young nobleman, kinsman to the Prince
Friar Laurence, A Franciscan
Friar John, A Franciscan
Apothecary
Two Officers of the Prince
Townspeople

Montague, Head of the household
Romeo, Son of Montague
Mercutio, Friend of Romeo, kinsman to the Prince
Benvolio, Friend of Romeo, nephew to Montague *Balthasar,* Servant to Romeo
Abram, Servant to Montague
Lady Montague, Wife of Montague

Capulet, Head of the household
Tybalt, Nephew to Lady Capulet
Gregory, Servant to Capulet
Sampson, Servant to Capulet
Peter, Servant to Juliet's Nurse
Lady Capulet, Wife of Capulet
Juliet, Daughter of Capulet
Nurse, Nanny to Juliet

Locations:
Verona and Mantua

Time:
Fourteenth Century

Prologue

Enter chorus. [Often presented by Friar Laurence.]

Two households, both alike in dignity°,
In fair Verona where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny°,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crossed° lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked° love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffik° of our stage;
The which if you will with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our° toil shall strive to mend.

ACT I, SCENE 1.
THE MARKET PLACE.

Enter Sampson and Gregory of the House of Capulet.

Greg. Draw thy tool! Here comes two of the house of Montagues.

Samp. My naked weapon is out. Quarrel! I will back thee.

Enter Abram and Balthasar.

Dignity: social position. *Mutiny:* discord. *Star-crossed:* ill-fated. *Death-marked:* doomed to die. *Traffik:* business. *Our:* i.e., the actors.

Greg. I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

Samp. Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Samp. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Samp. [Aside to Gregory.] Is the law on our side if I say aye?

Greg. [Aside to Sampson.] No.

Samp. No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

Greg. Do you quarrel, sir?

Abr. Quarrel, sir? No, sir.

Greg. You lie.

Samp. Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing° blow.

They fight.

Benvolio enters and beats down their rapiers.

List: please. *Swashing:* crashing.

Benvolio. Part, fools!
Put up your swords. You know not what you do.

Enter Tybalt.

Tybalt. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds°?
Turn thee, Benvolio. Look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword,
Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tybalt. What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word as I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee. Have at thee, coward!

They all fight.

Enter Old Capulet and his wife on one side and Old Montague and his wife on the other, followed by townspeople.

Cap. What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

Mon. Thou villain Capulet! Hold me not, let me go.

Enter Prince Escalus and his guards.

Prince. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
On pain of torture, from these bloody hands
Throw your mistempered° weapons to the ground
And hear the sentence of your moved° Prince.

Heartless hinds: timid servants. *Mistempered:* i.e., made for an evil purpose. *Moved:* angry.

All carefully set their weapons down.

Prince. Three civil brawls bred of an airy word,
By thee, Old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of the streets.
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit° of the peace.
For this time all the rest depart away.
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our farther pleasure in this case.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

ACT I, SCENE 2.
STREET NEAR THE CAPULET HOUSE.

Enter Capulet, County Paris, and Capulet's servant.

Paris. But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

Cap. But saying o'er what I have said before:
My child is yet a stranger in the world,
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years;
Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Paris. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. And too soon marred are those so early made.
The earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she.
Woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart;
My will to her consent is but a part.

Forfeit: punishment.

Cap. [To the servant, giving him a paper.] Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona, find those persons out
Whose names are written there, and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

Exit Capulet and Paris.

Servant. Find them out whose names are written here! I can never find what names the writing person hath writ here. I must to the learned.

Enter Benvolio and Romeo, laughing.

Romeo. Ah, god-den°, good fellow.

Servant. G-d° gi' god-den. I pray, sir, can you read?

Romeo. Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

Servant is about to depart.

[Romeo] Stay fellow. I can read.

Servant hands Romeo the list and Romeo reads.

"Signoir Martino and his wife and daughters; Count Anselmo and his beauteous sister; the lady widow of Vitruvio, Signoir Placentio and his lovely nieces; mine Uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; my fair niece Rosaline; Signoir Valentio and his cousin Tybalt."

god-den: good evening

[Romeo, returning the list.] A fair assembly. Wither should they come?

Servant. Up.

Romeo. Whither?

Servant. To supper, to our house.

Romeo. Whose house?

Servant. My master's.

Romeo. Indeed, I should have asked you that before.

Servant. Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich Capulet; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray come and crush° a cup of wine. Rest you merry! *[He exits.]*

Ben. At this same ancient feast° of Capulet's
Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lov'st,
With all the admired beauties of Verona.
Go thither, and with unattainted eye°
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Romeo. I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,
But to rejoice in splendor of mine own. *[They exit.]*

Crush: drink. *Ancient feast:* regular family gathering *Unattainted eye:* open mind.

ACT I, SCENE 3.
CAPULET'S HOUSE.

Enter Lady Capulet, Juliet, and Nurse.

Juliet. What is your will?

Lady C. Nurse, give us leave awhile,
We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again.
I have remembered me, thou'st hear our counsel.
Thou knowest my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse. Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

Lady C. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth—
And yet, to my teen be it spoken, I have but four—
Come Lammas° Eve at night shall she be fourteen.
Susan and she (G-d rest all Christian souls!)
Were of an age. Well, Susan is with G-d;
She was too good for me. But, as I said,
on Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.

Lady C. Enough of this. I pray thee hold thy peace.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. G-d mark thee to His grace!
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed.
An I might live to see thee married once, I have my wish.

Lammas Eve: a holy feast was held on Lammastide, August 1.

Lady C. Marry, that "marry" is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition° to be married?

Juliet. It is an honor that I dream not of.

Lady C. Well, think of marriage now. Younger than you,
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers. By my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief:
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady! Lady, such a man
As all the world—why he's a man of wax°.

Lady C. What say you? Can you love the gentleman°?
This night you shall behold him at our feast.
Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse. No less? Nay, bigger! Women grow by men!

Lady C. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Juliet. I'll look to like, if looking liking move°. *[They exit.]*

Disposition: inclination. *Man of wax:* i.e., molded into perfection. *Can you...the gentleman:* it was common practice at this time for parents to arrange their children's marriage. *I'll look...liking move:* i.e., I'll be open-minded.

ACT I, SCENE 4.
STREET NEAR THE CAPULET HOUSE.

Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio with five or six other maskers and torch bearers.

Romeo. Give me a torch. I am not for this ambling;
Being but heavy°, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo. We must have you dance.

Romeo. Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes
With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

Mer. You are a lover. Borrow Cupid's wings
And soar with them above a common bound°.
Come, we burn daylight, ho!

Romeo. We mean well in going to the masque°;
But 'tis no wit° to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask?

Romeo. I dreamt a dream tonight°.

Mer. And so did I.

Romeo. Well, what was yours?

Heavy: sad. *Bound:* leap. [Many dances of the day had leaping steps.] *Masque:* masquerade party. *Wit:* wise. *Tonight:* last night.

Mer. That dreamers often lie.

Romeo. In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

Mer. O, then I see Queen Mab° hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife°, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone°
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies°
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
Her traces, of the smallest spider's web;
Her collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid,
Her chariot is an empty hazelnut. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night
And bakes the elflocks° in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag°, when maids lie on their backs,
That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage°.
That is she—

Romeo. Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace.
Thou talk'st of nothing.

Queen Mab: queen of the fairies. *Fairies' midwife:* i.e., gives birth to men's fantasies. *Agate stone:* stone set in a ring *Atomies:* tiny creatures. *Elflocks:* matted hair from lack of brushing or grooming *Hag:* evil spirit. *Of good carriage:* able to bear children.