[Enter TYBALT and others]

TYBALT Follow me close, for I will speak to them. Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

MERCUTIO And but one word with one of us? couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

TYBALT You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

MERCUTIO Could you not take some occasion without giving?

TYBALT Mercutio, thou consort’st with Romeo,—

MERCUTIO Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here’s my fiddlestick; here’s that shall make you dance. ’Zounds, consort!

BENVOLIO We talk here in the public haunt of men: Either withdraw unto some private place, And reason coldly of your grievances, Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

MERCUTIO Men’s eyes were made to look, and let them gaze; I will not budge for no man’s pleasure, I.

[Enter ROMEO]

TYBALT Well, peace be with you, sir: here comes my man.

MERCUTIO But I’ll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery: Marry, go before to field, he’ll be your follower; Your worship in that sense may call him “man.”

TYBALT Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford No better term than this,—thou art a villain.

ROMEO Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee Doth much excuse the appertaining rage To such a greeting: villain am I none; Therefore farewell; I see thou know’st me not.

TYBALT Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries That thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

ROMEO I do protest, I never injured thee, But love thee better than thou canst devise, Till thou shalt know the reason of my love: And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender As dearly as my own,—be satisfied.

MERCUTIO O calm, dishonourable, vile submission! Alla stoccata carries it away. [Draws] Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

TYBALT What wouldst thou have with me?

MERCUTIO Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and as you shall use me hereafter, drybeat the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pitcher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

TYBALT I am for you. [Drawing]

ROMEO Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

MERCUTIO Come, sir, your passado.

[They fight]

ROMEO Draw, Benvolio; beat down their weapons. Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage! Tybalt, Mercutio, the prince expressly hath Forbidden bandying in Verona streets: Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio!

[TYBALT under ROMEO’s arm stabs MERCUTIO, and flies with his followers]

MERCUTIO I am hurt. A plague o’ both your houses! I am sped. Is he gone, and hath nothing?

BENVOLIO What, art thou hurt?

MERCUTIO Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, ’tis enough. Where is my page? Go, villain, fetch a surgeon. [Exit Page]

ROMEO Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

MERCUTIO No, ’tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door; but ’tis enough, ’twill serve: ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man. I am peppered, I warrant, for this world. A plague o’ both your houses! ’Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic! Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm.

ROMEO I thought all for the best.

MERCUTIO Help me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint. A plague o’ both your houses! They have made worms’ meat of me: I have it, And soundly too: your houses!

[Exeunt MERCUTIO and BENVOLIO]

ROMEO This gentleman, the prince’s near ally, My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt In my behalf; my reputation stain’d With Tybalt’s slander,—Tybalt, that an hour Hath been my kinsman! O sweet Juliet, Thy beauty hath made me effeminate And in my temper soften’d valour’s steel!