

SCENE 3 *Friar Laurence's cell in the monastery.*

Romeo goes from Capulet's garden to the monastery where Friar Laurence lives. The friar knows Romeo well and often gives him advice. As the scene begins, Friar Laurence is gathering herbs in the early morning. He talks of good and bad uses for herbs. Keep this in mind, since Friar Laurence's skill at mixing herbs becomes important later in the play. Romeo tells the friar that he loves Juliet and wants to marry her. The friar is amazed that Romeo has forgotten about Rosaline so easily and suggests that Romeo might be acting in haste. Eventually, however, he agrees to marry Romeo and Juliet, hoping that the marriage might end the feud between their families.

[Enter Friar Laurence alone, with a basket.]

Friar Laurence. The grey-eyed morn smiles on the
frowning night,
Chequ'ring the Eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.
Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye
The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,
I must upfill this osier cage of ours
With baleful weeds and precious-juiced flowers.
The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb,
What is her burying grave, that is her womb;
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural bosom find;
Many for many virtues excellent,
None but for some, and yet all different.
O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
In plants, herbs, stones, and their true qualities;
For naught so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good but, strained from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
And vice sometime's by action dignified.
Within the infant rind of this small flower
Poison hath residence, and medicine power;
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part;
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
Two such opposed kings encamp them still
In man as well as herbs—grace and rude will;
And where the worser is predominant,
Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

1–31 Friar Laurence begins his speech by describing how night changes into day. He then speaks of the herbs he is collecting. The friar is particularly fascinated with the idea that in herbs as well as man both good and evil can exist.

5 Titan is the god whose chariot pulls the sun into the sky each morning.

8 **osier cage:** willow basket.

10–11 **The earth . . . womb:** The same earth that acts as a tomb, or burial ground, is also the womb, or birthplace, of useful plants.

16–19 **mickle:** great. The Friar says that nothing from the earth is so evil that it doesn't do some good.

24–27 **Within . . . heart:** He holds a flower that can be used either as a poison or a medicine. If the flower is smelled, its fragrance can improve health in each part of the body; if eaten, it causes death.

29 **grace and rude will:** good and evil. Both exist in people as well as in plants.

[Enter Romeo.]

Romeo. Good morrow, father.

Friar Laurence. Benedicite!

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?
 35 Young son, it argues a distempered head
 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.
 Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
 And where care lodges sleep will never lie;
 But where unbruised youth with unstuffed brain
 40 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure
 Thou art uproused with some distemp'ature;
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right—
 Our Romeo hath not been in bed tonight.

45 Romeo. That last is true, the sweeter rest was mine.

Friar Laurence. God pardon sin! Wast thou with
 Rosaline?

Romeo. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? No.
 I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

50 Friar Laurence. That's my good son! But where hast
 thou been then?

Romeo. I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.
 I have been feasting with mine enemy,
 Where on a sudden one hath wounded me
 55 That's by me wounded. Both our remedies
 Within thy help and holy physic lies.
 I bear no hatred, blessed man, for, lo,
 My intercession likewise steads my foe.

60 Friar Laurence. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy
 drift.

Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift.

Romeo. Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
 On the fair daughter of rich Capulet;
 As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine,
 65 And all combined, save what thou must combine
 By holy marriage. When, and where, and how
 We met, we wooed, and made exchange of vow,
 I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
 That thou consent to marry us today.

33 **Benedicite** (bā'nā-dē'chī-tā): God bless you.

35-44 **it argues . . . tonight**: Only a disturbed (**distempered**) mind could make you get up so early. Old people may have trouble sleeping, but it is not normal for someone as young as you. Or were you up all night?

46-47 **God . . . Rosaline**: The Friar is shocked that Romeo has not been to bed yet. Where does he think Romeo has been?

52-61 Romeo tries to explain the situation and asks for help for both himself and his enemy (Juliet). In his excitement, Romeo talks in riddles, which confuse the Friar. The Friar tells Romeo to talk clearly.

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70 Friar Laurence. Holy Saint Francis! What a change
is here!

Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

75 Jesu Maria! What a deal of brine
Hath washed thy sallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!

80 The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in mine ancient ears.

Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear that is not washed off yet.
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline.

85 And art thou changed? Pronounce this sentence then:
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.

Romeo. Thou chidst me oft for loving Rosaline.

Friar Laurence. For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.

Romeo. And badest me bury love.

90 Friar Laurence. Not in a grave
To lay one in, another ought to have.

Romeo. I pray thee chide not. She whom I love now
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow.
The other did not so.

95 Friar Laurence. O, she knew well
Thy love did read by rote, that could not spell.
But come, young waverer, come go with me.
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;

100 For this alliance may so happy prove
To turn your households' rancor to pure love.

Romeo. O, let us hence! I stand on sudden haste.

Friar Laurence. Wisely, and slow. They stumble that
run fast.

[*Exeunt.*]

73-74 **Young . . . eyes:** How would you paraphrase this sentence?

75-85 **brine:** salt water. The Friar is referring to the tears Romeo has been shedding for Rosaline. What is his opinion of Romeo's rapid change of affections from one girl to another?

86 **Women . . . men:** If men are so weak, women may be forgiven for sinning.

87-88 **chidst:** scolded. The Friar replies that he scolded Romeo for being lovesick, not for loving.

92-96 **She whom . . . spell:** Romeo says that the woman he loves feels the same way about him. That wasn't true of Rosaline. The Friar replies that Rosaline knew that he didn't know what real love is.

99-100 This marriage may work out well and turn the feud between your families into love.

102-103 How is the Friar's warning similar to Juliet's fears in the previous scene?