

Romeo and Juliet I.1: Verona, a public place.

[Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, of the house of Capulet, armed with swords and bucklers]

SAMPSON Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.

GREGORY No, for then we should be colliers.

SAMPSON I mean, and we be in choler, we'll draw.

GREGORY Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.

SAMPSON I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GREGORY To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand: therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

SAMPSON A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

GREGORY That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

SAMPSON True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

GREGORY The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

SAMPSON 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids, and cut off their heads.

GREGORY The heads of the maids?

SAMPSON Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

GREGORY They must take it in sense that feel it.

SAMPSON Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

GREGORY 'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John. Draw thy tool! here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

SAMPSON My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

GREGORY How! turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON Fear me not.

GREGORY No, marry; I fear thee!

SAMPSON Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

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

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

[Enter ABRAHAM and BALTHASAR]

ABRAHAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON I do bite my thumb, sir.

ABRAHAM Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

SAMPSON [Aside to GREGORY] Is the law of our side, if I say ay?

GREGORY No.

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

GREGORY Do you quarrel, sir?

ABRAHAM Quarrel sir! no, sir.

SAMPSON If you do, sir, I am for you: I serve as good a man as you.

ABRAHAM No better.

SAMPSON Well, sir.

GREGORY Say 'better:' here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

SAMPSON Yes, better, sir.

ABRAHAM You lie.

SAMPSON Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing blow. [They fight] [Enter BENVOLIO]

BENVOLIO Part, fools! Put up your swords; you know not what you do. [Beats down their swords] [Enter TYBALT]

TYBALT What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

BENVOLIO 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 fight]