

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S  
*TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*  
- A Modern Version  
by *the shakespeare project***

**Teacher Material**

Preface ..... 2

1. About the play ..... 2

2. About the author(s)..... 4

3. Characters ..... 6

4. Shakespeare's original play - A summary ..... 8

5. Of artists and muses..... 10

6. Acting style..... 12

7. The long-distance relationship ..... 13

8. Possible assignments ..... 17

9. Rewriting a play ..... 23

10. Extra assignment for the very enthusiastic..... 29

11. Vocabulary..... 35

## **Preface**

In case you've ever wondered what happened to William Shakespeare, the most famous writer of all times ... Do you think he went to heaven when he died in 1616? Well, after years of diligent research we have actually found out ...

The poor chap did not make it into the realm of the blessed, somehow he got stuck in Writers' Purgatory. For when *THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*, his first comedy, was discovered after he had unsuccessfully tried to hide it from generations to come, a heavenly jury of the greatest writers decided that by such a work he would disgrace their exclusive Writers' Heaven. After long discussions they cast a spell on him, and since then poor Master Shakespeare has had to rewrite his play over and over again until he finally succeeds at modernising his play, spicing it up, and getting rid of some of its inherent beginner's flaws.

As some of the honourable writers considered this punishment to be still too mild, Christopher Marlowe sent his very own Muse, a creature who had long tormented him with weird fantasies, to "help" Shakespeare, and Chaucer heavily increased pressure on our poor protagonist when he set a tight time limit for the new version, that of 388 years. If Shakespeare needs any longer to submit the final draft of his modernised version, he will end up in Writers' Hell – for good. What a coincidence! The deadline is about to expire as we speak ... and the clock is ticking mercilessly – tick, tick, tick ...

### **1. About the play**

Shakespeare's original *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is one of his earliest comedies and therefore does not yet display the whole range of the playwright's later craftsmanship. It has actually kept him from entering Writers' Heaven for centuries, but luckily the Bard gets another chance to write himself into heaven and out of Writers' Purgatory: all that is needed is an acceptable new version of the play. To make the task somewhat more difficult and daunting, this has to be a modern version – quite a challenge for a writer who has no clue what the 21<sup>st</sup> century is all about. Fortunately, or at least, in fact, a Muse is by his side – but whether she is of help to him or rather messing things up is a very tricky question.

In any case, Shakespeare and the Muse decide that in the new version Valentine should be a young student leaving Texas and his best friend Proteus to study at Hurtmoor College in England, a prestigious all-male school of hair and beauty. Proteus stays behind, as he is madly in love with Julia and does not want to leave his beloved. Soon after Valentine's arrival in England, the young adventurer falls madly in love with Silvia, the Hurtmoor College Dean's daughter. The Dean, however, would like to see his daughter married to Thurio, a well-to-do student at Hurtmoor College with all the right connections and family background. Against his son's wishes, Proteus's father decides that Proteus should get a proper education, too, and he sends him off to Hurtmoor College as well. Thus Proteus and Valentine are reunited in England, where Proteus cannot help falling in love with the beautiful Silvia straight away. Silvia, on the other hand, has started to fancy Valentine. Proteus betrays his best friend Valentine's intentions of eloping with Silvia to the Dean, and as a result Valentine is expelled from college and told never to see Silvia again. Deeply hurt by his loss, he joins a gang of outlaws in the woods of England as their leader.

At the college, only Proteus and Thurio are left to fight over Silvia's favours. She, however, chooses to run away in search of her beloved Valentine. Meanwhile, Julia – disguised as a man – has arrived at the college as well in order to find out what has happened to her boyfriend. She discovers the betrayal but still fights to win Proteus back.

In the final scene everybody meets in the woods and the play ends happily. Valentine and Silvia get back together, with the Dean's consent this time. Julia reveals her true identity and is reunited with Proteus, who becomes aware of his mistakes and is reconciled with Valentine. Thurio, finally, is too superficial and selfish to be sad about his failure to gain Silvia's favour. So they all live happily ever after ...

The Muse, being a creature of love and romance, seems to like the outcome of Shakespeare's final attempt to rewrite *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, whereas William himself is rather desperate and intends to give up. It seems as if only Steven Spielberg might be able to rescue the situation and Rosamunde Pilcher would be more than delighted to help him...

## **2. About the author(s)**

### ***the shakespeare project***

Started as a writing project initiated by Martin Buxbaum at the University of Vienna's English Department, *the shakespeare project* quickly developed into a group of dedicated young writers who turned Shakespeare's somewhat flawed early romantic comedy into a hilariously entertaining modern play while staying true to the basic plot and spirit of the original. The new draft version was then used by the director and cast as a starting point and modified/adapted to suit the actors' individual talents during the rehearsal process. The result is a modernised version that hopefully shows that Shakespeare's plays can indeed be as timeless as critics often claim they are.

### **William Shakespeare**

Even though the *shakespeare project's* version of *Two Gentleman of Verona* was written several centuries after the Bard's death, it seems essential that the teacher materials also include some information about Shakespeare and the theatre of his time. After all, the modern version also attempts to be true in spirit to Shakespeare's original (not only in the plot) and to have a similar audience appeal as Shakespeare's plays enjoyed during his life-time. Besides, in the modern version Shakespeare himself enters the stage once more, too.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1564. We know only little about Shakespeare's youth, but some believe that he must have spent time outside England, because he had profound knowledge of various foreign countries. In December 1582, he married Ann Hathaway, who later gave birth to three children. In 1594 Shakespeare joined the Lord Chamberlain's Men, one of the most successful acting troupes in London. When the troupe lost the lease of their theatre in 1599, they were in the financial position to build their own theatre on the south shore of the river Thames: *The Globe*.

Shakespeare worked as an actor and playwright and wrote as many as 37 plays. He died in Stratford-upon-Avon on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1616.

Shakespeare's work can roughly be divided into 4 groups:

- 1) Tragedies: about classical Greek and Roman topics, typically with a tragic ending.  
(e.g.: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Titus Andronicus*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet* ...)
- 2) Histories: about topics from English history (e.g.: *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI*, *Henry VIII*, *Richard II*, *Richard III*, ...)
- 3) Comedies: fun plays about light topics with entertaining story-lines and happy endings, often with one or several marriages (e.g.: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ...)
- 4) Poetry: most prominently sonnets, a special type of poem with a particular rhyme scheme. A sonnet by definition must have 14 lines, with each line consisting of 10 syllables in iambic pentameter, which gives rhythm and pace to the line. The 14 lines must comprise 3 quatrains (1 quatrain = 4 lines) and one ending couplet in an abab cdcd efef gg rhyme scheme. The sonnet typically pauses for thought at the end of the second quatrain and proceeds through a resolution in the third quatrain and a conclusion in the final couplet.

### **The Globe Theatre**

The Globe was a round theatre with 4 galleries. In the central area people had to stand and usually walked around during the performances. Shakespeare used a lot of different sceneries in his plays, still the audience understood, as they were familiar with very simple things suggesting certain concepts (e.g.: a man in boots was a messenger, people holding candles suggested night-time, chairs on stage symbolised indoor scenes, and so on).

Women were not allowed on stage at Shakespeare's time, so male actors had to play their parts, too. The plays usually started at three o'clock in the afternoon in order to make use of the daylight.

In fact, the Globe Theatre still exists (again). It was rebuilt in the 1990s after having burnt down in 1613. When in London, you can go and watch a Shakespeare play there – but the tickets cost more than a penny or sixpence or half a crown these days.

Much additional information about Shakespeare and/or the Globe is available at various websites, e.g.: <http://www.online-literature.com/shakespeare/>.

### **3. Characters**

#### *Shakespeare*

William Shakespeare is in a desperate situation: he is stuck in Writers' Purgatory with the Muse, and the prospect of finally having to go to Writers' Hell is a constant threat. His self-confidence is not necessarily increased by hanging out with the Muse, who – despite her protestations to the contrary – makes his life rather difficult. Regardless of her continuous suggestions, Shakespeare has some difficulty letting go of his original text, and he also finds it rather hard to get used to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, current styles and topics. Master Shakespeare loves and at the same time also hates his Muse, but he needs her to write himself into Writers' Heaven, and the clock is ticking...

#### *Muse*

The Muse was formerly assigned to Christopher Marlowe, who at some point managed to get rid of her, and so Shakespeare has been in the "lucky" position to be chosen by her as her next victim, or customer. Since that time, Shakespeare has been stuck with this creative, over-the-top romantic creature who enjoys standing in a pool of stage light whenever possible. Sure, she also helps her protégé to write his new version, but she is not particularly objective since she is quite openly in love with all the male characters ... well, she is just obsessed ... and seems to be a true creature of the 21<sup>st</sup> century altogether. Despite her romantic side, she can be quite tough, especially concerning Master William's eyes following Julia, or when she prevents him from exploring tragic approaches and too dramatic story elements. Love triangles, sex and crime and a happy ending are the only things she will accept. So it turns out that this Muse happens to be somewhat different from her Greek examples. Instead of being an airy creature who kisses the poet and thus endows him with the poetic gift of inspiration, she constantly mingles in things she is not supposed to and cannot think of anything other than well-built boys longing for their first experiences in love and ...

#### *Valentine*

Valentine leaves Texas to study at Hurtmoor College in England, a prestigious all-male school of hair and beauty. He cannot understand why his best friend Proteus

wants to stay behind, as he himself has never experienced love and nothing holds him back in Texas. He wants to discover the world, but once in England he falls in love with Silvia, the Dean's daughter. His feelings are entirely sincere, but because of Proteus's betrayal he is expelled from college and has to live in the woods of England, where he becomes the leader of a gang of outlaws in best Robin Hood fashion.

### *Proteus*

Proteus's best friend is not as it seems Valentine but his own hair. He is constantly falling in and out of love and seems to change his girls as often as his hair colour. When he first sees Sylvia, he starts to fancy her straight away and forgets all about his girl-friend Julia back home in Texas, as well as he ignores any loyalty he once felt towards his best friend Valentine. Being endowed with massive self-esteem he cannot possibly understand that Sylvia does not love him, but later on gladly takes Julia back when she comes to England.

### *Silvia*

Silvia is the Dean's daughter. Wooed by many, she only loves Valentine and remains faithful even when he lives in the English woods as an outlaw. She is a dedicated female student, a highly emancipated and flirtatious young lady who remains dedicated to her creator Shakespeare. Hence, she even patiently endures Proteus's enamoured attempts, as those are part of the script and her role. She is a compassionate woman and feels sorry for poor Julia, left and cheated on by her boyfriend. In the end, however, she suggests to the Bard that her role be changed in the future and explains her vision of this new character by the name of Lady Macbeth.

### *Julia*

Julia follows her boyfriend Proteus to England to win him back. She disguises as a man and becomes friends with Proteus to find out what is going on. She is quite happy upon realizing that Silvia is not really after her boyfriend and, unbelievably, she takes him back when he discovers her true identity in the woods of England: "Alas how love can trifle with itself!" Julia seems to have a weak spot for Shakespeare's original text and does not mind using the original language as often as

possible, although she does make a point at the end of the play that modern women would not be too satisfied with her role. Well, obviously, it came out of a male feather, ...

#### *Dean*

The Dean of Hurtmoor College is an authority figure who only wants the best for his daughter. Thus, he is easily tricked by those pretending to have his daughter's happiness at heart, and easily convinced to do whatever is necessary to ensure his daughter's well-being.

#### *Thurio*

Thurio fancies Silvia because of her status and is the Dean's ideal son in law. When he discovers, however, that winning Sylvia is a rather difficult and ultimately lost cause, he quickly moves on to greener pastures.

#### *Speed*

Speed is Proteus's friend, servant and messenger. As such he should be rather loyal, but he can be a real bastard, a real dog or a real pirate at times, ...

### **4. Shakespeare's original play - A summary**

To enable you to appreciate and enjoy Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona – A Modern Version* to the fullest, here's a brief summary of the Bard's original play:

William Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

**Valentine** and **Proteus**, two young gentlemen of Verona, have always been the best of friends. But Valentine bids Proteus farewell and goes off to seek his place in the world at the court of the Duke of Milan. Proteus, however, is quite satisfied to remain in Verona, for he loves the city's fairest lady, **Julia**. When Julia receives a love letter from Proteus, she pretends to her maid that it means nothing to her. Secretly, though, she loves Proteus as much as he loves her, and she sends a letter of her own back to him. Believing that the letter Proteus holds is from Valentine, and unaware of his son's love for Julia, Antonio informs Proteus that he, too, must go to Milan to educate and improve himself. In Milan, meanwhile, Valentine has also found love. The object of his affection is the Duke's daughter, the beautiful **Silvia**.

Although her father wishes her to marry an asinine courtier named Thurio, Silvia turns her attentions toward Valentine, asking him to act as a secretary. His job is to write love letters for Silvia's "friend", but in fact they are to be her letters to Valentine. When Proteus arrives, Valentine introduces him to Silvia, and Proteus immediately falls in love with her. All thoughts of Julia vanish from his mind. Valentine then shares with him his plan to elope with Silvia by using a rope ladder to effect Silvia's escape from her room in a tower. Back in Verona, Julia pines for Proteus. Unable to endure separation from him any longer, she disguises herself as a page and leaves for Milan to be with him. While Julia is en route, Proteus – desperate to have Silvia for himself – betrays Valentine and informs the Duke of the planned elopement.

The Duke discovers the evidence and banishes Valentine from Milan. Proteus then tries another trick. To worm his way into Silvia's presence, he pretends to help the hapless Thurio in his suit. But when the moment is right, he takes over and woos Sylvia himself. Sylvia, however, spurns him with insults, for she loves only Valentine. She is well aware that it was Proteus who betrayed him. In the meantime, Valentine is captured by noble outlaws in a forest outside Mantua. But so impressed are they with his manner and bearing that they offer to make him their chief. He accepts on condition that they do not victimize women or the poor.

Back in Milan, Julia learns of her beloved's unfaithfulness. Her heart nearly breaks. Calling herself Sebastian, she gets herself hired by Proteus as a page. Proteus, still hoping to win Silvia, tells "Sebastian" his first job is to carry to Silvia a token of affection. It is a ring – the same ring Julia had given to Proteus as a going-away present. Silvia refuses to accept the ring. Determined to be with Valentine, she escapes the city to look for him. Proteus follows her, and the page (Julia) follows him. In the forest, the outlaws capture Silvia, but Proteus rescues her and resumes his wooing. He threatens to force himself upon her if she does not yield. Hidden nearby, Valentine hears everything and shows himself. "Ruffian, let go that rude uncivil touch," he commands. Shame and guilt overwhelm Proteus, and he begs forgiveness. Valentine forgives him, and as proof of his good will, he tells Proteus, "All that was mine in Silvia I give thee." Upon hearing this, Julia faints. When she

comes to, she reveals her true identity, and Proteus decides that it is she he loves after all. Julia also forgives him.

The Duke of Milan, too, has been searching for Silvia and, with Thurio in tow, comes upon Valentine and the others. Thurio attempts to claim Silvia as his, but Valentine challenges him. Thurio backs off, saying that only a fool would endanger his life for "a girl that loves him not." The Duke rebukes Thurio: "The more degenerate and debase art thou, to make such means for her as thou hast done and leave her on such slight conditions." Having censured the cowardly Thurio, the Duke then turns to the brave and stalwart Valentine and accepts him as Silvia's future husband. Valentine beseeches the Duke to grant a pardon to his band of forest friends, and the Duke absolves them of all wrongdoing. The play ends happily with Valentine and Proteus looking forward to their "day of marriage ...; one feast, one house, one mutual happiness."

## **5. Of artists and muses**

Authors sometimes suffer from what is commonly called writer's block. This means that they are unable to find useful ideas or words to proceed with their work on a text. Even though there might be various incentives to overcome the blockage and start, continue or finish a text, there are occasions when nothing can be done to jump-start their creative juices. Writers may try various strategies to overcome this writer's block, even professional institutions designed to help desperate authors.

Still, even professional help might not lead to the desired results, and in their despair writers may be willing to try anything to get their ideas going again: joining isolated camps for authors, employing a tutor, jotting down ideas day and night, getting out into the world to be inspired, travelling, getting rid of pages and pages of drafts ... and yet, sometimes not even financial incentives or imminent threats against one's very existence can help.

And then, all of a sudden, the blockage is gone and out of the blue the writer is creative and productive again, and ideas and words seem to be flowing in an abundance that makes the earlier writer's block seem only a distant memory. It's as if it had never been there. What has happened?

Well, one of the possible explanations is that the artist has been kissed by a muse. Muses were the ancient Greek patron goddesses of the arts (poetry and music) and later also of the sciences. They were either Zeus and Mnemosyne's (the artist's memory), or Uranus and Mother Earth's (Gaia's) daughters. They were born at the base of Mount Olymp, preferred living in mountain areas, and were led by Appollon. The Muses beat the sirens in a fight, and as a result the sirens retreated to the sea. While the ancient Greeks worshiped all the muses as goddesses of the arts, the Romans assigned each of the nine ladies a special genre:

Erato – muse of poems, especially love poems

Euterpe – muse of flute music and tragic choirs

Calliope – muse of the epic genre, rhetoric and philosophy

Clio – muse of history

Polyhymnia – muse of singing and music

Terpsichore – muse of dance

Thalia – muse of comedy

Urania – muse of astrology

Melpomene – muse of song

It is said that the muse usually comes and kisses the artist to work her magic. The kiss is not very intense and often just a little breeze, since the muse normally moves on to another artist in need before the first one realises that he has been visited.

No matter what we think about their influence today, and whichever concept or term we use to express the notion of the artist's inspiration, muses certainly live on in words such as museum, music, musical, etc.



In *the shakespeare project's* version and the *vtp's* production of *Two Gentleman of Verona*, the Muse is not presented as a lovely, sensitive, and airy creature. Our Muse is more likely to slap the artist rather than to kiss him. But well, there's more than one road to success.

**Possible Questions**

- What is it like for you when you feel inspired?
- Is inspiration predictable for you? Can you control it?
- Have you ever experienced writer's block when you had to write an assignment or some text? What did you do to overcome the blockage?
- Do you know any films in which writers are inspired by muses? What are the muses like in those films?
- Why do you think we say "kissed by a muse"? What's so special about a kiss? Can you think of other verbs that could be used instead of "kissed"?

**6. Acting style**

At Shakespeare's day and age, we know, the prevalent acting style was to direct one's lines and speeches more to the audience than to one's fellow actors on stage, thereby making the audience an immediate participant in the stage events. In our modern version, however, we've tried to combine this somewhat artificial classical style with the more naturalistic acting styles that are characteristic of our modern times. Thus, all the characters go back and forth between speaking directly to, or exchanging looks with, the audience and at the next moment interacting with other characters on stage as if there was no audience in the room at all. For the audience, this code-switching, if you want to call it that, provides a dual perspective: 1) that of the involved participant in the performance who is drawn in by the actors and invited to engage actively in what happens on stage, and 2) that of the distant spectator who, like with television, watches from afar and is not emotionally, and probably also not intellectually involved in the goings-on on stage.

Each style has its advantages and disadvantages, we think, so maybe the combination of both provides a useful road to travel by.

## 7. The long-distance relationship

A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING  
by John Donne

Source:  
Donne, John. *Poems of John Donne*, vol I.  
E. K. Chambers, ed.  
London, Lawrence & Bullen, 1896. 51-52.

As virtuous men pass mildly away,  
And whisper to their souls to go,  
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,  
"Now his breath goes," and some say, "No."

So let us melt, and make no noise, 5  
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;  
'Twere profanation of our joys  
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears;  
Men reckon what it did, and meant; 10  
But trepidation of the spheres,  
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love  
—Whose soul is sense—cannot admit 15  
Of absence, 'cause it doth remove  
The thing which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined,  
That ourselves know not what it is,  
Inter-assurèd of the mind,  
Care less, eyes, lips and hands to miss. 20

Our two souls therefore, which are one,  
Though I must go, endure not yet  
A breach, but an expansion,  
Like gold to aery thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so 25  
As stiff twin compasses are two ;  
Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,  
Yet, when the other far doth roam, 30  
It leans, and hearkens after it,  
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,  
Like th' other foot, obliquely run ; 35  
Thy firmness makes my circle just,  
And makes me end where I begun.

The tender love that is about to blossom between Julia and Proteus is suddenly put to a test when Proteus is sent abroad. Even though one might not think about it straight away, this is a classic case of a possible long-distance relationship. And so, it seems that even at Shakespeare's time people were sometimes burdened with being

far away from their sweetheart, due to the lack of communication maybe even more so than today. How, then, did they cope with being separated from their beloved, and most importantly: Did their love survive?

Let's think about ourselves: It all started a little while ago, when the fun times of our kindergarten careers came to an end all of a sudden in some year's September, and we had to enter school. The immobility caused by our young age made it impossible for us to keep seeing our kindergarten sweetheart, who quite possibly had to attend a different primary school. And so, our first long-distance relationship started (and probably quickly ended) at the tender age of six.

But it made sense to get used to that feeling of not having one's beloved nearby, or around for long, since brief holiday encounters and the occasional escape from parental supervision to language camps abroad soon opened the doors to the next opportunities for long-distance relationships. Meeting the one and only at the pool, or at the language lab, falling in love and soon thereafter saying goodbye again in the hotel lobby or at the airport, within only a few weeks of having met, were typical elements of growing up.

But again, in many of these situations we all probably said that we would love each other forever, and only our premature age determined how serious we were when we uttered promises of eternal faithfulness (namely, not at all ... we simply didn't know any better, we just thought we were serious).

Later, in our early twenties, we would embark on study exchange programmes, and yet again we were dead serious about the newly-found sweetheart. Too bad that one party lived in Sweden and the other in Spain, one in Estonia and the other in Chile. It was love at first sight, and love forever – all over again. Clearly, we had learned from our previous experiences.

Our reasoning might have gone like this: It does not matter WHY and WHERE I meet my true love (On a language trip? During an ERASMUS exchange programme? On a business trip, a holiday?). As soon as we feel that we're truly in love, we are willing to move mountains to be together because things simply start to get too frustrating when we have to travel for hours for a kiss.

So what is to be done in such a situation? Emails, astronomical telephone bills, travelling on weekends, ... Couples in long-distance relationships have probably had their considerable share in financing the world's railway companies and airlines.

But there is help just around the corner: Thank God for the Internet. We google "long-distance relationship" and find out (0.12 seconds later) that we are not the only one who suffers because our beloved lives in Abu Dhabi – 1,190,000 links to pages about long-distance relationships suggest as much.

Soon we are told that distance is never a problem when true love, mutual respect, trust and commitment are part of the game. But how can we be sure of the other when three mountain chains, two oceans and a team of Swedish cheerleaders are between us and our love? The Internet, it turns out, does not help at all.

The occasional text message might help, and so does the undying hope of being the lucky winner in the Japanese quiz draw that would provide a free flight to our sweetheart in Kyoto.

And, hey, there's still Shakespeare. He was one smart Bard, and pretty romantic, too. Maybe he knows what the long-distance lover should do. His works do give some advice:

First of all we have to ask ourselves: "To be, or not to be, that is the question." (Hamlet in *Hamlet*) To be in love, that is. Meaning: should we continue with the relationship or not. Of course, William has an answer to this question:

"For never was a story of more woe

Than this of Juliet and her Romeo." (Prince in *Romeo and Juliet*)

This, of course, suggests that since Romeo and Juliet, the most star-crossed lovers of all time, gave it a try, we might do so, too. And crossing borders IS easier than crossing stars (well, most of the time).

Furthermore, "If love be rough with you, be rough with love." (Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*). There is no need to be depressed and full of heart-ache. It is better to continue daily life as before and to look forward to the next meeting.

Then, of course, there are the occasional outbreaks of doubt and uncertainty. Some seem to suffer from this illness more than others, but it's always there, lurking in the shadows. Is s/he really faithful? Why did our last telephone conversation not go well?

What did he mean when he said that his new secretary was hard-working? And suddenly I'm certain: He has met somebody else.

"I have no other but a woman's reason:

I think him so, because I think him so." (Lucetta in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*)

Shakespeare, however, comforts the female world with a rational argument.

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,

Men were deceivers ever,—

One foot in sea and one on shore,

To one thing constant never." (Balthasar in *Much Ado about Nothing*)

A great comfort that is!

Moreover, Shakespeare suggests that we should be and live "As merry as the day is long" (Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*), and that we should not worry too much, since distance makes the heart grow fonder, or as Shakespeare puts it:

"This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,

May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet." (Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*)

Occasional checking in between, such as Julia does in both versions of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, can be recommended and may prove successful.

Obviously, Shakespeare, romantic that he is, suggests that we should not fear long-distance relationships – they can work out. So, to help yours along: Get online! (but not to google "long-distance relationship" but rather to book a flight to your beloved – maybe to Kathmandu?).

### **Possible Questions**

- Have you ever been in a long-distance relationship? Was it difficult or easy? Why?
- What did you do to make the long-distance relationship work? Did it work?
- Which advice would you give somebody who is about to enter into a long-distance relationship?
- Which qualities in a couple make a long-distance relationship more likely to succeed?
- Do you think Shakespeare is right with the things he says about relationships and characteristic behaviour of women and men?

## 8. Possible assignments

### Excerpt 1 – ACT I Scene 1

- VALENTINE Look, Proteus, there's no point, ... I'm going to England.
- PROTEUS Or you could stay at home and we're gonna have just as much fun. Come on, aren't you gonna miss this?
- VALENTINE Those who stay at home ain't never gonna think of anything but home. That's the way it always happens. You stay at home, get married, become a couch potato, ...
- PROTEUS What's wrong with wanting to marry Julia now?
- VALENTINE Yeah, yeah, lovey dovey. You chain yourself to Julia, man ... You should come along for the ride, get away from Texas for a while, and see the wonders of the world.
- PROTEUS The what?
- VALENTINE Chicks. You got no idea what you're missing. But okay, stay at home, slack off, live your life on cruise control – go on – it's cool. I'd probably do that too if I was in love.
- PROTEUS Fine then. Great. Just leave. Have fun with the chicks all over the world, whatever. But you know what? One day – one day you're gonna fall in love. One day you'll be the one looking like a moron bringing girls flowers, singing stupid love songs, ... And then, Val, think of me, think of your good ole friend Proteus.
- VALENTINE *doing the whip thing.*
- PROTEUS Yeah, great, go ahead and make fun of me, but one day you'll see I was right.
- VALENTINE You've been watching too many chick flicks with Julia, dude, like that ocean-liner tear-jerker.
- PROTEUS Titanic is not a chick flick! That's true love, right there.
- VALENTINE Yeah, it kills.... You are just in love with being in love. And besides you're not Leonardo di Caprio.
- PROTEUS What, yeah, of course I ain't, but I think Julia's hotter than Kate Winslet anyway...
- VALENTINE That's not the point.
- PROTEUS But do you even have a point?

VALENTINE You're not ... Uh. You've changed. You are not the same guy I used to hang out with. (*doing the "Tooltime"-grunt*) You are not a beer-drinking, football-playing buddy any more. You've gotten all ... sensitive and ... shit.

PROTEUS You know what ... I have changed, and I like it, because this is who I really am. I am what I am and I need no excuses.

Proteus grabs a feather boa and performs to "I am what I am".

VALENTINE Love is blind, and lovers cannot see  
the pretty follies they themselves commit. (*Merchant of Venice*)

SHAKESPEARE Nice line, Val. Damn I'm good...

(*A car honks.*)

VALENTINE That's it then, my Dad's waiting. I gotta go. (*They are trying to hug, but then just shake hands*). Later dude ... (*Valentine exits.*)

*Light change.*

PROTEUS He after honour hunts, I after love.  
He leaves his friends to dignify them more,  
I leave myself, my friends and all, for love.  
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphised me:  
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,  
War with good counsel, set the world at nought,  
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

### **Possible Questions**

- 1) Why does Proteus not understand that Valentine wants to leave Texas? Why does Proteus not want to leave?
- 2) What is Valentine's attitude towards love?
- 3) What does Valentine mean when he says to Proteus "You are just in love with being in love?" (And knowing Proteus from the performance, is he right?)
- 4) Valentine says at the end of this dialogue "Love is blind, and lovers cannot see the pretty follies they themselves commit." Discuss this statement in a descriptive-reflective essay.
- 5) Have you ever had a dispute or disagreement with a good friend of yours, just because one suddenly had a boyfriend/girlfriend and you could no longer hang out with each other the way you used to? Write a short story about that incident.
- 6) When in England, Valentine writes his first letter to Proteus. Compose that letter.

EXCERPT 2 – last scene in Act IV – At Proteus's request, the disguised Julia takes Silvia the ring Julia originally gave to Proteus as a sign of her undying love.

JULIA           How many women would do such a message?  
Alas, poor Proteus, thou hast entertained  
A fox to be the shepherd of thy lambs.  
Alas poor fool, why do I pity him  
That with his very heart despiseth me?  
Because he loves her, he despiseth me;  
Because I love him, I must pity him.  
This ring I gave him when he parted from me,  
To bind him to remember my good will;  
And now am I, unhappy messenger,  
To plead for that which I would not obtain,  
To carry that which I would have refused,  
To praise his faith which I would have dispraised.  
I am my master's true confirmed love,  
But cannot be true servant to my master  
Unless I prove false traitor to myself.  
Yet will I woo for him, but yet so coldly  
As, heaven knows, I would not have him speed.

(*enter SILVIA*)

Gentlewoman, good day. I pray you be my mean  
To bring me where to speak with Madam Silvia.

SILVIA           What would you with her, if that I be she?

JULIA           If you be she, I do entreat your patience  
To hear the message I am sent on.

SILVIA           From whom?

JULIA           From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SILVIA           O, he sends you for a picture?

JULIA           Ay, madam.

SILVIA           Go, give your master this.  
It's a picture from my high-school prom. I look like a sheep.  
Tell him from me,  
One Julia, that his changing thoughts forget,  
Would better fit his chamber than this shadow.

JULIA           Madam, he sends your ladyship this ring.

SILVIA           The more shame for him that he sends it me;  
For I have heard him say a thousand times  
His Julia gave it him at his departure.  
Though his false finger have profaned the ring,  
Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.

JULIA           She thanks you.

SILVIA           What say'st thou?

JULIA           I thank you that you tender her.  
Poor gentlewoman, my master wrongs her much.

SILVIA Dost thou know her?

JULIA Almost as well as I do know myself.

SILVIA Belike she thinks that Proteus hath forsook her?

JULIA Huh?

SILVIA You think she knows the bastard is cheating on her?

JULIA I think she doth.

SILVIA Is she not passing fair?

JULIA She hath been fairer, madam, than she is.  
When she did think my master loved her well,  
She, in my judgement, was as fair as you.  
But since she did neglect her looking – glass  
And threw her sun-expelling mask away,  
The air hath starved the roses in her cheeks  
And pinched the lily-tincture of her face,  
That now she is become as black as I.

SILVIA How tall is she?

JULIA About my stature; for at Pentecost,  
When all our pageants of delight were played,  
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,  
And I was trimmed in Madam Julia's gown,  
Which served me as fit, by all men's judgements,  
As if the garment had been made for me;  
So yeah, she's just about my height.

SILVIA She is beholding to thee, gentle youth.  
Alas, poor lady, desolate and left!  
I weep myself to think upon thy words.  
Here, youth, there is my purse; I give thee this  
For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lov'st her.  
'Bye!

*(exit Silvia)*

JULIA And she shall thank you for it, if e'er you know her.  
A virtuous gentlewoman, mild and beautiful!  
I hope my master's suit will be but cold,  
Since she respects my mistress' love so much.  
Alas, how love can trifle with itself!  
Here is her picture; let me see; I think,  
This face of mine  
Were full as lovely as is this of hers.  
Her hair is auburn and with really bad highlights  
mine is perfect yellow;  
If that be all the difference in his love,  
I'll get me such a coloured periwig.  
Come, shadow, come, and take this shadow up,  
For 'tis thy rival. O thou senseless form,  
Thou shalt be worshipped, kissed loved and adored!

*(she starts to tear the picture up, then stops)*

I'll use thee kindly for thy mistress' sake  
That used me so; or else, by Jove I vow,  
I should have scratched out your unseeing eyes  
To make my master out of love with thee.  
Those highlights really are crap.

### **Questions and Tasks**

- 1) Why does Julia say "How many women would do such a message"?
- 2) Characterise Silvia in this scene!
- 3) Why does Julia answer to Silvia's question whether she knows Julia: "Almost as well as I know myself".
- 4) Read Julia's monologue at the end again! What is Julia talking about? Can you understand why she says the things she says?
- 5) That very night Julia writes a diary entry. Compose her entry. How might she feel (about her situation, towards Proteus, towards Silvia).
- 6) The next day Julia wants to write a *Thank You Note* to Silvia. Write it for her.
- 7) Solidarity among women. Does it still exist? Discuss!

## EXCERPT 3 – Frame 1 (after Proteus's monologue in Act I)

- MUSE (*cutting in, freezing Proteus*) Time-out! Time-out! This is what you wrote last time!  
(*To audience*) Will you listen to him? Has been re-writing this play these 400 years, and he's still here in Writers' Purgatory ... and you call him the greatest writer of all times!
- SHAKESPEARE O not you again! You know that this play was my first try.
- MUSE Well, if you had listened to me, you wouldn't be here.
- SHAKESPEARE The stupid dog ate all my notes.
- MUSE O shut up – you sound like Britney Spears with PMS! Listen, I'm here to help. We better see to it that we get your play straightened out – or do you feel like sitting here for 400 more years? 2 hours – that's all the time we've got to get it done.
- SHAKESPEARE Or what? Another 400 years in Writers' Purgatory with you??? I'd rather go to Writers' Hell than that ...
- MUSE Are you sure, Willie-boy? Writers' Hell? Writing horoscopes for the Times?
- SHAKESPEARE (*a panic attack, running back to his pen and paper*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!! (*He resumes writing*).
- MUSE Writers' Hell doesn't really sound so appealing, does it? (*Shakespeare looks at her*). So may I remind you that you have a deadline coming up?! The clock is ticking.
- SHAKESPEARE Exactly. So – would you be so kind as to take your leave NOW!
- MUSE Leave you? Leave you??? (*starts to sing, then stops*) I couldn't leave you in your hour of need! I'm here to help. I AM your inspiration, you know! And besides, muses are multi-tasking! I can play any role you'd like. (*she gets a look from Shakespeare*). Well, let's see what you've got ... (*looks over his shoulder*) Oh no! That's too slow. We have to get this thing going! We need tempo, speed!!! (*unfreezing Proteus*) SPEEEEEEEED!!! (*Speed, a skull looking like a pirate of the Caribbean comes dangling down from the ceiling...*)

**Questions and tasks**

- 1) Based on this scene, characterise the relationship between Shakespeare and the Muse. How do their opinions about the new version differ? And who is in control?
- 2) Describe what Shakespeare's life would be like in Writers' Hell and what he would be doing there all day.
- 3) The Muse writes a letter home to describe what her new job with William Shakespeare is like and how she manages to cope with him. Write the letter.
- 4) Which words or sentences in this passage most clearly convey the attitude of the speaker towards the other character? What is it about these words or sentences that makes them markers of attitude?

## 9. Rewriting a play

SHAKESPEARE      Tonight's the night! This time I'll write myself into heaven! My two gentlemen have quite undone me. And so I sit here doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, and for the day confined to fast fires ...

### REWRITING A SHAKESPEARE PLAY

Rewriting something seems pretty easy at first sight: you already have an original and so you just have to change and add a few things. Or so we thought at the beginning of this project. 8 months later we all know that changing something that already exists still requires quite a bit of creativity. Actually, in rewriting you have to both follow the original but still create something completely different out of it – not the easiest job, and yet, what great fun it was...

### HOW THE WHOLE PROJECT PROGRESSED STEP BY STEP

First, it was very important to plunge into the world of the original text, to get carried away by its words, and to become familiar with the ancient language. Then, once we had grasped the original's essence, had got accustomed to the atmosphere it evoked, we moved on to exploring its full meaning through further reading (the publisher's notes, scholarly essays, footnotes, word explanations etc.). Thus, it became possible for us to understand the text's full meaning, with all its allusions and references of all kinds.

As a next step, we analysed the structure of the play, set up a skeleton of the acts and scenes and linked the different parts of the scenes to very short and general summaries of their respective contents. After having thus gained an overview over structure and content, we chose a scene which we then examined more thoroughly through a detailed scene analysis that focussed on the scene's characters, their features, development and their language. Part of the task also was to understand the scene's function in the complete set-up of the play.

At this stage, we started the actual rewriting process by doing some exercises in modernising the language of a specific passage, transforming each line into modern language. We also decided which characters we wanted to keep in their own right and which to translate into the new version by other means (such as authorial comment and the like), and which scenes we thought were absolutely essential.

Then we started to collect ideas for the modern version and soon came to the conclusion that by inventing a frame story, we would not only create our distinct version of the play but also solve many of the problems caused by the passage of almost 400 years between the original version and ours. Master Shakespeare himself would be brought back to life and onto the stage, and thus we would manage to breathe new life into the play without abandoning the atmosphere and basic story line of the original. The idea of the writing genius being in the process of writing one of his plays and having to deal with different aspects of his artistic inspiration, personified to perfection by a Muse, soon captured our own imagination.

The group was divided into two sub-groups: one would be responsible for the frame-story, the other would rewrite the essential scenes of the original, which were then to be linked through the frame-story. The frame-story group usually worked as one unit; in the rewriting group 2-3 writers were in charge of each main character that was retained in the new version (Valentine, Proteus, Julia and Silvia) and had to participate in rewriting each of the scenes in which their character appeared so as to provide consistency.

We learned that we had to make up our minds as to which aspects we wanted to keep in the spirit of the original, for example concerning character features. We also learned that in rewriting the play, we had to consider if something would work on stage technically and also if it would capture the audience. We had to organise the story through stage directions and with time the whole play started to come alive before our inner eyes, as we increasingly visualized the entire set-up. With time, we felt more and more certain that we wanted the Muse to give Shakespeare a dirty look in one place, or to have Shakespeare withdraw sulkily at some other point. We started to identify with our creative work.

That we could not put aside our background in studying literature is rather obvious in our version, especially in the way we thoroughly explored the relationship between the author and his own characters. They complain to him, blame him for things he makes them do which they would never have done out of their own impulses, they take the initiative, develop a certain life of their own, but still depend – at least most of the time – on Master Shakespeare to put words into their mouths. This tendency

even goes a step further when they are interviewed at the end and as a consequence get the chance to say what they think about themselves. Yet another device we used was having the actors break out of character and look up in the script what they are supposed to do or say, etc.

Some parts we rewrote in modern-day, or let's better say Texan colloquial language, in others we mixed the old Shakespearian lines with modern language, which resulted in some hilarious contrasts. We even integrated some slightly altered original scenes into our modern text.

### Act I, Scene 2

JULIA           O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!  
                  Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey  
                  And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!  
                  I'll kiss each several paper for amends.  
                  "You're such a pretty babe!" – I am so evil! I crushed the heart of "caring  
                  Proteus, passionate Proteus, poor, forlorn Proteus ..."  
                  Three times Proteus ... and where is my name? Anyway,  
                  "Love-wounded Proteus" – poor wounded name,  
                  my bosom as a bed shall lodge thee  
                  till thy wound be thoroughly healed.  
                  It's so cute ... he deserves a kiss ... or more ...

### Act II, Scene 7

SILVIA          Dost thou know her?  
JULIA          Almost as well as I do know myself.  
SILVIA          Belike she thinks that Proteus hath forsook her?  
JULIA          Huh?  
SILVIA          You think she knows the bastard is cheating on her?  
JULIA          I think she doth.

It was also much fun to look for quotations from other Shakespeare plays which we could integrate into our version. The fact that we encountered a wide range of suitable options highlighted the fact that this play is one of Shakespeare's earliest comedies, an attempt to try out different things which he explored in greater depth in his later plays. Therefore, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* should not be judged by

the same standards as his later comedies, it does not yet display the whole range of the writer's later craftsmanship. It should be seen more as one of his first experiments in gathering dramatic devices and developing stock characters as elements for his future plays. The attentive reader recognizes Romeo's Juliet in the character of Julia, Proteus as the archetype of later villains, and so on. In a way, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* can thus be regarded as Master William's personal treasure box of drama and comedy.

As mentioned earlier, parts of the play we translated completely into modern-day colloquial language:

#### ACT I Scene 1

VALENTINE Look, Proteus, there's no point, ... I'm going to England.

PROTEUS Or you could stay at home and we're gonna have just as much fun. Come on, aren't you gonna miss this?

VALENTINE Those who stay at home ain't never gonna think of anything but home. That's the way it always happens. You stay at home, get married, become a couch potato, ...

PROTEUS What's wrong with wanting to marry Julia now?

VALENTINE Yeah, yeah, lovey dovey. You chain yourself to Julia, man ... You should come along for the ride, get away from Texas for a while, and see the wonders of the world.

PROTEUS The what?

VALENTINE Chicks. You got no idea what you're missing. But okay, stay at home, slack off, live your life on cruise control – go on – it's cool. I'd probably do that too if I was in love.

PROTEUS Fine then. Great. Just leave. Have fun with the chicks all over the world, whatever. But you know what? One day – one day you're gonna fall in love. One day you'll be the one looking like a moron bringing girls flowers, singing stupid love songs, ... And then, Val, think of me, think of your good ole friend Proteus.

VALENTINE *doing the whip thing.*

PROTEUS Yeah, great, go ahead and make fun of me, but one day you'll see I was right.

VALENTINE You've been watching too many chick flicks with Julia, dude, like that ocean-liner tear-jerker.

PROTEUS Titanic is not a chick flick! That's true love, right there.

VALENTINE Yeah, it kills.... You are just in love with being in love. And besides you're not Leonardo di Caprio.

PROTEUS What, yeah, of course I ain't, but I think Julia's hotter than Kate Winslet anyway...

VALENTINE That's not the point.

PROTEUS But do you even have a point?

VALENTINE You're not ... Uh. You've changed. You are not the same guy I used to hang out with. (*doing the "Tooltime"-grunt*) You are not a beer-drinking, football-playing buddy any more. You've gotten all ... sensitive and ... shit.

PROTEUS You know what ... I have changed, and I like it, because this is who I really am. I am what I am and I need no excuses.

*Proteus grabs a feather boa and performs to "I am what I am".*

VALENTINE Love is blind, and lovers cannot see  
the pretty follies they themselves commit. (*Merchant of Venice*)

SHAKESPEARE Nice line, Val. Damn I'm good...

*(A car honks.)*

VALENTINE That's it then, my Dad's waiting. I gotta go. (*They are trying to hug, but then just shake hands*). Later dude ... (*Valentine exits.*)

Other scenes remained in the original language:

Act I, Scene I

PROTEUS He after honour hunts, I after love.  
He leaves his friends to dignify them more,  
I leave myself, my friends and all, for love.  
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphised me:  
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,  
War with good counsel, set the world at nought,  
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

Once we had completed the rewriting and the creation of the frame-story elements we continued by proof-reading our work with regard to character and language consistency, stage instructions, general language mistakes, etc.

Writing the modern version as a team together with so many other people was demanding and thrilling at the same time. The flow of ideas was fuelled by many different inputs, but we always had to figure out ways of how to find a compromise somewhere in between the different approaches.

In the end we have to say that rewriting a classic is both a challenge and great fun. It can be done, but not overnight. Much preparation is needed, and the outcome will be up in the air until the day the project ends.

## 10. Extra assignment for the very enthusiastic

Read the following extract taken from Shakespeare's famous *Romeo and Juliet* and rewrite it as a modern version. Then try to act out the new version.

ACT II; SCENE II. Capulet's orchard.

Enter ROMEO.

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

(JULIET appears above at a window.)

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she:

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.

It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

JULIET

Ay me!

ROMEO

She speaks:

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head

As is a winged messenger of heaven

Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes

Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him

When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds

And sails upon the bosom of the air.

JULIET

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

ROMEO

[Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

JULIET

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? that which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet;  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name which is no part of thee  
Take all myself.

ROMEO

I take thee at thy word:  
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;  
Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

JULIET

What man art thou that thus bescreen'd in night  
So stumblest on my counsel?

ROMEO

By a name  
I know not how to tell thee who I am:  
My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,  
Because it is an enemy to thee;  
Had I it written, I would tear the word.

JULIET

My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words  
Of that tongue's utterance, yet I know the sound:  
Art thou not Romeo and a Montague?

ROMEO

Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

JULIET

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

ROMEO

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;  
For stony limits cannot hold love out,  
And what love can do that dares love attempt;  
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

JULIET

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

ROMEO

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
Than twenty of their swords: look thou but sweet,  
And I am proof against their enmity.

JULIET

I would not for the world they saw thee here.

ROMEO

I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;  
And but thou love me, let them find me here:  
My life were better ended by their hate,  
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

JULIET

By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

ROMEO

By love, who first did prompt me to inquire;  
He lent me counsel and I lent him eyes.  
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far  
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,  
I would adventure for such merchandise.

JULIET

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night  
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay,'  
And I will take thy word: yet if thou swear'st,  
Thou mayst prove false; at lovers' perjuries  
Then say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown and be perverse an say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,  
And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light:  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,  
My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

ROMEO

Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops--

JULIET

O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

ROMEO

What shall I swear by?

JULIET

Do not swear at all;

Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,

Which is the god of my idolatry,

And I'll believe thee.

ROMEO

If my heart's dear love--

JULIET

Well, do not swear: although I joy in thee,

I have no joy of this contract to-night:

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;

Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be

Ere one can say 'It lightens.' Sweet, good night!

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,

May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.

Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest

Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

ROMEO

O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

JULIET

What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

ROMEO

The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

JULIET

I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:

And yet I would it were to give again.

ROMEO

Wouldst thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

JULIET

But to be frank, and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

The more I have, for both are infinite.

(Nurse calls within)

I hear some noise within; dear love, adieu!

Anon, good nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.

Stay but a little, I will come again.

(Exit, above)

ROMEO

O blessed, blessed night! I am afeard.

Being in night, all this is but a dream,

Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter JULIET, above

JULIET

Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.  
If that thy bent of love be honourable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,  
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;  
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay  
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

Nurse [Within]  
Madam!

JULIET

I come, anon.--But if thou mean'st not well,  
I do beseech thee--

Nurse [Within]  
Madam!

JULIET

By and by, I come:--  
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:  
To-morrow will I send.

ROMEO

So thrive my soul--

JULIET

A thousand times good night!  
(Exit, above)

ROMEO

A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.  
Love goes toward love, as schoolboys from  
their books,  
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.  
(Retiring)

Re-enter JULIET, above

JULIET

Hist! Romeo, hist! O, for a falconer's voice,  
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!  
Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

ROMEO

It is my soul that calls upon my name:  
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears!

JULIET  
Romeo!

ROMEO  
My dear?

JULIET  
At what o'clock to-morrow  
Shall I send to thee?

ROMEO  
At the hour of nine.

JULIET  
I will not fail: 'tis twenty years till then.  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.

ROMEO  
Let me stand here till thou remember it.

JULIET  
I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,  
Remembering how I love thy company.

ROMEO  
And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
Forgetting any other home but this.

JULIET  
'Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:  
And yet no further than a wanton's bird;  
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,  
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,  
And with a silk thread plucks it back again,  
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

ROMEO  
I would I were thy bird.

JULIET  
Sweet, so would I:  
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.  
Good night, good night! parting is such  
sweet sorrow,  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.  
(Exit above)

ROMEO  
Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!  
Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!  
Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,  
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.  
(Exit)

## 11. Vocabulary

doomed	dem Schicksal verfallen
confined	gebunden an, beschränkt auf
couch potato	Stubenhocker
lovey dovey	Turteltäubchen
podunk	Kuhdorf
chick	sl. Mädchen
to slack off	nachlässig werden
cruise control	Temporegler
moron	Depp
chick flick	Frauenfilm
dude	Kerl, Typ
ocean-liner	Ozeandampfer
tear-jerker	Schnulze
Leonardo di Caprio	American actor who starred in the Hollywood movie <i>Titanic</i>
Kate Winslet	British actress who starred in the Hollywood movie <i>Titanic</i>
to hang out	sl. Abhängen
buddy	Kamerad, Kumpel
folly	Torheit
to metamorphise	verändern
to neglect	vernachlässigen
time-out	Unterbrechung, das Timeout
purgatory	Fegefeuer
PMS	premenstrual syndrome
Britney Spears	American pop star
to straighten out	ausbügeln, korrigieren
appealing	ansprechend
Follow the yellow brick road.	Berühmtes Zitat aus dem Film <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
to mistake sb.	jmd. Verwechslen
to take the can	etwas ausbaden
inspiring	inspirierend
squeaky	quietschend
to keep records	Aufzeichnungen führen
Still waters run deep.	Stille Wasser sind tief.
calm	ruhig
dull	ausdruckslos, matt
sea-sick	seekrank
to spy on sb.	jmd. ausspionieren
to hold one's tongue	den Mund halten
confession	Geständnis
injurious	schädlich
wasp	Wespe
to yield	einbringen
amends	Genugtuung
evil	böse, schlecht
to crush	erdrücken
forlorn	einsam, verlassen
to lodge	logieren
to be bored to sobs	zu Tränen gelangweilt
rampant	zügellos

desire	Verlangen
kinky	verdreht, verkorkst, abnorm
to figure out	herausfinden
unrequited	unerwidert
passion	Leidenschaft
pinch	Prise
intrigue	Intrige
dean	Dekan
to sigh	seufzen
to relish	genießen
robin redbreast	Rotkehlchen
melancholic	melancholisch
contemplation	Erwägung
google	eine Suchmaschine
entry	Eintrag
to be kidding	veräppeln
crap	Mist, Scheisse
brainless	hirnlos
favour	Gefallen
to grant	gewähren
to fancy	gern mögen
Prince Charming	Märchenprinz
self-centered	egozentrisch
high lights	Strähnchen
to enlighten	erleuchten, aufklären
proper	angemessen
gum	Kaugummi
rival	Konkurrent
to fornicate	Unzucht treiben
to imply	unterstellen
wrapped	eingepackt
hide	Fell
pot	Hasch
worthy	würdig
scepter	Szepter
fortress	Festung
realm	Gebiet, Reich
nauseous	Ekel erregend
approval	Zustimmung
bonding	Verbindung
to whistle	pfeifen
to spice sth. up	etw. aufpeppen
love triangle	Dreiecksverhältnis
goddess	Göttin
pathetic	armselig
league	Liga
to be engaged	verlobt sein
rope ladder	Strickleiter
discontent	Unzufriedenheit
dignity	Würde
mutiny	Meuterei

awesome	großartig, toll, cool
obviously	offensichtlich
to cheat on sb.	jmd. betrügen
suspense	Spannung
star-crossed	unter einem schlechten Stern stehen
Judy Garland	actress who starred in the movie <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>
to reclaim	zurückfordern
to suck	sl. beschissen sein
emerald	Smaragd
to be pleased	sich freuen
deceit	Betrug
to beat about the bush	um den heißen Brei herum reden
tedious	ermüdend
to hate sb.'s guts	jmd. abgrundtief hassen
ungrateful	undankbar
brat	Göre
to elope	wegrennen, durchbrennen
goose bumps	Gänsehaut
punishment	Strafe
swift	schnell
to assign	auftragen, aufgeben
leather-bound	Ganzleder
supplement	Beilage
to be committed	engagiert sein
to suspect	verdächtigen
boredom	Langeweile
to expel	ausschließen, verweisen
nailpolish remover	Nagellackentferner
to flush	runterlassen
bleak	freudlos
didactic purpose	belehrender Zweck
stream of consciousness	lit. Genre - Sprache zu vergleichen mit dem Inneren Monolog
dodgy	fragwürdig
infamous	berüchtigt
vice	Untugend
screen-writer	Drehbuchautor
creepy	gruselig
habiliment	Kleidungsstück
to banish	verbannen
offence	Vergehen
to repent	bereuen
to slay (slew, slain)	erschlagen
manful	mannhaft
to cite	anführen
to parley	sich besprechen
wilderness	Wildnis
consort	Verbündeter
to detest	hassen
dispose	Verfügungsmacht
error	Fehler
to roam	herum wandern

to slander	verleumden
to reckon	glauben
to fake	vortäuschen
suicide attempt	Selbstmordversuch
to croon	summen
preference	Vorzug
godforsaken	gottverlassen
gorgeous	prächtig
flat	flau, flach
kindness	Freundlichkeit
excelling	übertreffend
garland	Girlande
abysmal	abgrundtief
horrid	abscheulich
scheming	Machenschaften
stab	erstechen
in-crowd	Schickeria
to stick together	zusammenhalten
to deliver	überbringen
approved	genehmigt
bro	brother, Kumpel
shepherd	Hirte
to plead	bitten, flehen
to obtain	erhalten
to dispraise	missbilligen
traitor	Verräter
to woo	umwerben
high-school prom	Abschlussball an der Highschool
departure	Abreise
to profane	entweihen
to tender	dienen
to forsake	im Stich lassen
fair	schön
looking-glass	Spiegel
to pinch	stibitzen
Pentecost	Pfingsten
garment	Gewand
virtuous	tugendhaft
to trifle	spielen
auburn	rotbraun
periwig	Perücke
to adore	anbeten
sake	Willen
by Jove	beim Jupiter
slipper	Hausschuhe
smurfy	schlumpfenhaft
diet	Ernährungsweise
blush	Röte
tan	Bräune
pinky	kleiner Finger
sophisticated	hochentwickelt, mondän

---

spam	Spam, unerwünschte E-mails
stud	Hengst
appealing	ansprechend
to insist on	bestehen auf
orgy	Orgie
to catch up	aufholen
desperate	verzweifelt
to chat sb. up	jmd. Anmachen/ansprechen
outlaw	Bandit, Gesetzesloser
to make a fuss	viel Aufhebens machen
to intrude	eindringen
to owe	schulden
eyelashes	Wimpern
curler	Wickler
to struggle	kämpfen, ringen
spoilt	verwöhnt, verzogen
split ends	gespaltene Haarenden
saucy	keck, frech
shell	Hülle
slut	Schlampe
pal	Kumpel
to shave	rasieren
to overreact	überreagieren
jerk	Trottel
to trust	vertrauen
contrived	arrangiert
wedlock	Ehestand
to freeze	erstarren
to frame sb.	jmd. etwas anhängen
candid	offen, ehrlich
to rebel	rebellieren, sich auflehnen
oppressive	unterdrückend
resolution	Entschluss