

Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

MERCUTIO A challenge, on my life.

BENVOLIO Romeo will answer it.

MERCUTIO Any man that can write may answer a letter.

BENVOLIO Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

MERCUTIO Alas poor Romeo! he is already dead: stabbed with a white wench's black eye; shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft: and is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

BENVOLIO Why, what is Tybalt?

MERCUTIO More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O, he is the courageous captain of complements. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause: ah, the immortal *passado*! the *punto reverso*! the *hai*!

BENVOLIO The what?

MERCUTIO The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! "By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!" Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these *perdona-mi*'s, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? O, their bones, their bones!

(*Enter* ROMEO.)