WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

 ROMEO & JULIET

 ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN BY CRAIG PEARCE AND BAZ LUHRMANN

 FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

 October 6, 1995

EXT. HIGHWAY. AFTERNOON.

A ribbon of freeway stretching into a blue and pink late

afternoon sky. A huge dark sedan, windows tinted gold,

headlights blazing, powers directly for us.

CUT TO: A heavy, low-slung, pickup truck traveling toward

the sedan.

WIDE SHOT: Sky, freeway, the cars closing.

TIGHT ON: The sedan.

TIGHT ON: The pickup.

Like thunderous, jousting opponents, the cars pass in a

deafening cacophony of noise.

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

TIGHT ON: The fat face of GREGORY, yelling at the

disappearing sedan.

 GREGORY

 A dog of the house of Capulet moves

 me!

He and the pimply-faced front-seat passenger, SAMPSON,

explode with laughter.

The red-haired driver BENVOLIO, keeps his eyes on the road.

EXT. EXIT RAMP. AFTERNOON.

The truck spirals down an exit ramp and screeches into busy

driveway of a large gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Attendants immediately run to the truck. Two clean

windshields and duco, the third fills the gas tank.

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

Gregory in the back seat is boasting outrageously.

 GREGORY

 A dog of that house shall move me

 to stand. I will take the wall of

 any man or maid of Capulets.

Sampson, sarcastically.

 SAMPSON

 That shows thee a weak slave. For

 the weakest goes to the wall.

 GREGORY

 'Tis true; and therefore women,

 being the weaker vessels, are ever

 thrust to the wall. Therefore, I

 will push Capulet's men from the

 wall, and thrust his maids to the

 wall.

Benvolio, disgusted, gets out of the car.

 BENVOLIO

 The quarrel is between our masters...

 GREGORY

 (yelling after him)

 ...and us their men.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

FOLLOW: Benvolio as he heads for the bathroom.

PICK UP: A mother wrangling three little boys out of a

station wagon - the smallest kid carries a toy pistol.

SUPER FAST SCAN TRACK: Past the mother to - the huge black

sedan pulling up outside the gas station mini-mart.

The front door of the sedan opens. Shiny black boots -

decorated with tiny, silver, cat-shaped spurs - plant

themselves on the ground. The boots are joined by two other

pairs of well-shod feet.

HOLD: The spurred boots move out of frame.

CRANE UP: The other feet belong to a tough-looking Latin

youth ABRA - and his goateed side-kick PETRUCHIO.

Abra and Petruchio enter the mini-mart, as four white-clad

girls exit.

FOLLOW: The girls as they head for their car.

SUPER FAST SCAN TRACK: Past the girls to:

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

Sampson is trying to out boast Gregory.

 SAMPSON

 I will show myself a tyrant. When

 I have fought with the men I will

 be civil with the maids, I will cut

 off their heads.

Gregory; mock outrage.

 GREGORY

 The heads of the maids?

Sampson leers lecherously at the girls.

 SAMPSON

 Ay, the heads of the maids, or

 their maiden heads, take it in what

 sense thou wilt.

 GREGORY

 They must take it in sense that

 feel it.

Gregory and Sampson pump up the song on the sound system and

sing out at the girls.

 GREGORY/SAMPSON

 (singing)

 I am a pretty piece of flesh!

 I am a pretty piece of flesh!

 Me, they shall feel while I am able

 to stand;

 I am a pretty piece of flesh!

The girls, pretending not to notice, get into the car.

EXT. GAS STATION - MINIMART. AFTERNOON.

GREGORY'S P.O.V.: The car pulls away revealing... Abra and

Petruchio exiting the mini-mart.

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: Gregory.

CLOSE ON: Sampson - Their singing abruptly halts.

 SAMPSON

 Here comes of the House of Capulet.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Abra and Petruchio stare coldly toward the boys.

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: Sampson swallowing hard.

CLOSE ON: Gregory; eyes locked to the Capulets. With fake

bravado he nudges Sampson.

 GREGORY

 Quarrel I will back thee.

CLOSE ON: Sampson trying to quell his rising panic.

 SAMPSON

 Let us take the law of our sides.

 Let them begin.

SUDDENLY: BANG! Gregory and Sampson jump.

WHIP PAN: It was the garage attendant slamming the hood.

Gregory and Sampson are mortally embarrassed.

EXT. MINI-MART. AFTERNOON.

Abra and Petruchio laugh contemptuously and move to their

car:

FOLLOW: The mother and kids exiting the mini-mart.

SUPER FAST SCAN TRACK: To...

INT. TRUCK. AFTERNOON.

Sampson furiously tries to save face.

 SAMPSON

 I will bite my thumb at them; which

 is a disgrace to them if they bear

 it.

Sampson quickly bites his thumb toward Abra's back as he

gets into the sedan.

INT. SEDAN. AFTERNOON.

Abra's eyes flick to the rear view mirror.

E.C.U.: The rear view mirror; Sampson biting his thumb.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Suddenly, a blood curdling screech of tires - the sedan,

rubber burning, reverses full speed toward Sampson and

Gregory.

The mother in the station wagon brakes to avoid collision -

a sports car shunts into her vehicle. Mother and children

scream.

Attendants scatter.

The Capulet car shudders to a halt inches from the truck,

blocking its path.

INT. BLACK SEDAN. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: A scurry of limbs scrabbling across seats and

reaching for door handles;

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Abra hauls Sampson from the truck. Gregory leaps out,

Petruchio covers him. Abra slams Sampson against the side of

the vehicle - then, goading him to go for his gun, screams:

 ABRA

 Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sampson's shaking hand hovers - ready to draw.

 SAMPSON

 I do bite my thumb, sir.

INT. STATION WAGON. AFTERNOON.

CUT TO: The panicked mother in the station wagon. She

motions her children to the floor.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

Customers run for cover.

CLOSE ON: Abra: An hysterical rage; he shrieks:

 ABRA

 Do you bite you thumb at us, sir?

 SAMPSON

 (sweating, murmurs to Gregory)

 Is the law on our side if I say "Ay"?

 GREGORY

 No.

INT. BATHROOM. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: The black cowboy boots, trousers down around them.

The sound of a toilet flushing.

PAN TO: The next cubicle, the door opens revealing Benvolio.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: Sampson, still sweating.

 SAMPSON

 No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at

 you, sir - but I do bite my thumb,

 sir!

CUT TO: Gregory; a ridiculous inquiry.

 GREGORY

 Do you quarrel, sir?

CUT TO: Abra; a dangerous smile.

 ABRA

 Quarrel sir, no sir.

CLOSE ON: Sampson; unconvincing bravado...

 SAMPSON

 But if you do, sir, I am for you. I

 serve as good a man as you.

CLOSE ON: Abra; a lethal question.

 ABRA

 No better?

CLOSE ON: Sampson, trapped.

 SAMPSON

 Well sir...

INT. STATION WAGON. AFTERNOON.

CUT TO: Inside the station wagon. The mother does not

notice her five year old aiming a toy gun toward the boys.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

CUT TO: Gregory's P.O.V.: Benvolio emerging from the

bathroom - he whispers maniacally.

 GREGORY

 Here comes our kinsman. Say better!

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Sampson; he screams:

 SAMPSON

 YES SIR, BETTER!

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Abra demonically roars:

 ABRA

 THOU LIEST!

CUT TO: Benvolio. Terror stricken, he sees the boys.

DISTORTED OUT OF CONTROL CLOSE UP: Abra shrieks:

 ABRA

 DRAW IF YOU BE MEN!

LIGHTNING CUT: Four hands reaching for guns.

SLAM ZOOM: To Benvolio - weapon outstretched he screams:

 BENVOLIO

 Part, fools! You know not what you

 do!

MUSIC STING; A SUPER MARCO SLAM ZOOM along the barrel of

Benvolio's gun; the engraved gun type reads:

'Sword 9mm series S'

CUT TO: Benvolio. He screams in desperation:

 BENVOLIO

 Put up your swords!

Gregory, Sampson, Abra, and Petruchio freeze. A moment -

then from behind, the unmistakable sound of a gun being

cocked.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: The black cowboy boots.

CRANE UP: To find the dark cold eyes and feline smile, of

the wearer of the boots. His name is TYBALT; a cigarette is

clenched between his teeth and his gun is aimed at Benvolio's

head.

 TYBALT

 What, art thou drawn amoung these

 heartless hinds?

 Turn thee Benvolio.

Benvolio, a choked explanation:

 BENVOLIO

 I do but keep the peace.

A mocking smile.

 TYBALT

 Peace? I hate the word

 As I hate hell, all Montagues, and...

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Tybalt's finger squeezing the trigger...

Suddenly we hear firing from Tybalt's blind side.

Tybalt redirects his weapon, cracking off a single shot at

the surprise attacker.

EXT./INT. MINIMART. AFTERNOON.

It is the five year old from the station wagon. The bullet

smacks the toy gun from the child's hand, shattering the

wagon's window.

Mother and children scream.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

A panicked Benvolio falls back, accidentally his gun fires -

the bullet whistles past Tybalt's head.

Tybalt combat rolls, and using a screaming car load of girls

as cover, returns two quick shots, narrowly missing Benvolio.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

The gas station attendant hits a button and heavy metal

screens slam down.

EXT. GAS STATION. AFTERNOON.

CUT TO: Gregory firing - a bullet rips through Abra's arm.

Petruchio dives for cover; Gregory and Sampson leap into

Benvolio's truck. Rubber burns as they smash past the

Capulet vehicle.

CLOSE ON: Tybalt taking aim.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SUPERMARKET. AFTERNOON.

His first shot plugs the fuel tank, the second a tire. Out

of control and spewing gasoline the Montague truck careens

across the highway and through the glass front of a

supermarket.

Gregory and Sampson throw themselves from the truck moments

before...

EXT. SUPERMARKET. AFTERNOON.

CLOSE ON: The gas tank erupts into an almighty fireball.

The screen fills with flame: the following images combust in

front of us:

EXT. HIGHWAY - SUPERMARKET - FROM AIR. AFTERNOON.

NEWS CHOPPER P.O.V.: Citizens run in the streets.

Looters raid shops near the supermarket - security guards

return fire.

INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

A table of dark suited men and their wives.

CLOSE ON: The powerful 60 year old face of FULGENCIO CAPULET.

Seated next to him is his much younger wife GLORIA.

SUDDENLY: Windows explode in a tidal wave of glass. Diners

take cover.

Capulet moves fearlessly toward the window.

 CAPULET

 (to a waiter)

 Give me my long sword!

EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: The word MONTAGUE fills the screen.

PULL BACK: We see the word is the number plate of a large

black limousine.

The limousine is stuck in the traffic snarl - bullets bounce

off its bullet proof windshield.

INT. MONTAGUE'S LIMOUSINE. NIGHT.

TED MONTAGUE, a 60 year old red-faced bulldog of a man,

bursts from the back of the limousine.

 MONTAGUE

 What noise is this!

As Ted draws an enormous pearl handed revolver, CAROLINE,

his conservatively dressed wife, tries to restrain him.

 CAROLINE

 Thou shalt not stir one foot to

 seek a foe!

 MONTAGUE

 (shrugging her off)

 Hold me not, let me go!

EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

Crouched behind a truck, Benvolio shakily tries to re-load.

CLOSE ON: The barrel of Tybalt's gun enters frame and

presses into Benvolio's forehead. Tybalt whispers sweetly.

 TYBALT

 Look upon thy death, Benvolio.

CLOSE ON: Tybalt's finger on the trigger. Benvolio screams

a scream of mortal horror.

SUDDENLY Tybalt is blinded by a burning shaft of light. A

magnificently powerful helicopter gunship hovers above him.

A command booms from the chopper's public address system.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 (over PA)

 Rebellious subjects, enemies to

 peace,

 Throw your mistempered weapons to

 the ground.

INT. CHOPPER. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: The steely gray eyes of CAPTAIN PRINCE, chief of

the Verona Beach Police Department. He lifts the microphone

and repeats the command.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Throw your mistempered weapons to

 the ground!

EXT. VERONA BEACH. NIGHT.

Tybalt looks up to the chopper. Patrol cars screech to a

halt.

An almighty orchestral chord.

EXT. VERONA BEACH - MATTE SHOT. NIGHT.

SUPER WIDE SHOT: A trail of devastation winds up through

grid-locked traffic to the burning supermarket.

In the distance looms an enormous statue of Christ flanked

by two glass towers. We push toward the towers. One is

neon-crowned MONTAGUE, the other, CAPULET.

We hear:

 VOICE OVER

 Two households, both alike in

 dignity.

 In fair Verona, where we lay our

 scene

 From ancient grudge break to new

 mutiny,

 Where civil blood makes civil hands

 unclean.

 From forth the fatal loins of these

 two foes

 A pair of star crossed lovers take

 their life.

 Whose misadventured piteous

 overthrows

 Doth with their death bury their

 parents strife.

A dark chord.

EXT. VERONA BEACH SKYLINE. NIGHT.

A swarm of helicopters thunder into frame. We see

compressed, time-lapsed, images of their journey.

SLAM INTO: A coat of arms that labels a large tower - the

emblem reads; "Verona Beach Police Department: In God We

Trust".

HOLD:

INT. CAPTAIN PRINCE'S PRECINCT OFFICE. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Captain Prince's grim features. He eyes Capulet

and Montague.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Three civil brawls, bred of an airy

 word

 By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,

 Have thrice disturbed the quiet of

 our streets.

Capulet's lawyer tries to intervene.

 LAWYER

 My noble Prince I can...

Captain Prince overriding, slams the desk.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 If ever you disturb our streets

 again,

 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of

 the peace.

Hold on Captain Prince's determined gaze.

EXT. VERONA STREET. DAWN.

A majestic sunrise; Ted Montague's limousine sulks through

deserted streets. In the distance, Jesus looks out over the

now peaceful city.

INT. MONTAGUE'S LIMOUSINE. DAWN.

Ted Montague, his wife Caroline, and nephew Benvolio ride in

uncomfortable silence.

Caroline finally speaks her anger.

 CAROLINE

 O where is Romeo? Saw you him

 today?

 (pointedly to Montague)

 Right glad I am he was not at this

 fray.

Montague snorts derisively and stares out the window.

Embarrassed, Benvolio tries to be of assistance.

 BENVOLIO

 Madam, underneath The Grove of

 Sycamore

 So early walking did I see your son.

Ted Montague speaks with contempt.

 MONTAGUE

 Many a morning hath he there been

 seen

 With tears augmenting the fresh

 morning's dew.

Caroline struggles to contain her emotion.

 CAROLINE

 Away from light steals home my

 heavy son

 And private in his chamber pens

 himself,

 Shuts up his windows, locks fair

 daylight out

 And makes himself an artificial

 night.

Montague barks into the car intercom.

 MONTAGUE

 Westward from this city side.

EXT. STREET. DAWN.

The limousine U-turns heading west.

EXT. BEACH. DAWN.

To the melancholic strains of Mozart's "Serenade for Winds",

we see a blond nineteen year old boy sitting alone on an

empty beach.

CLOSE ON: The boy, ROMEO. Looking out over the ocean he

sucks on the last of a cigarette and then writes intensely

in a small worn note book.

We hear his voice over.

 ROMEO (V/O)

 Love is a smoke made with the fume

 of sighs;

 Being purged, a fire sparkling in

 lovers' eyes;

 Being vexed, a sea nourished with

 lovers' tears.

 What is it else? A madness most

 discreet,

 A choking gall and a preserving

 sweet.

INT. MONTAGUE'S LIMOUSINE. DAWN.

The limo is parked in a cross street that runs down to the

beach.

Opposite the limo, young diehard clubbers, faded drag queens

and street people, hang outside a dilapidated nightclub. A

broken neon sign reads: "The Grove of Sick Amore."

Ted, Caroline and Benvolio sit watching the silhouette of

Romeo on the beach.

 MONTAGUE

 Black and portentous must this

 humour prove

 Unless good counsel may the cause

 remove.

EXT. BEACH. DAWN.

P.O.V.: From the limousine. Romeo rises and listlessly

makes his way up the beach - seeing his father's car he

turns and heads for the path that hugs the beach front.

INT. MONTAGUE'S LIMOUSINE. DAWN.

 BENVOLIO

 So please you step aside.

 I'll know his grievance or be much

 denied.

Benvolio clambers out of the limo.

CLOSE ON: Montague, an encouraging smile.

 MONTAGUE

 Come Madam. Let's away.

EXT. STREET. DAWN.

The limousine pulls away and Benvolio heads after Romeo. He

pauses. A deck at the rear of "Sick Amore" sprawls onto the

beach. At the base of the deck, Benvolio can see Romeo

squatting in discussion with an old drunk. Benvolio

approaches with a not very convincing casualness.

 BENVOLIO

 Good morrow, cousin.

Romeo turns. Sore, red, unfriendly eyes squint back at

Benvolio.

 ROMEO

 Is the day so young?

 BENVOLIO

 But new struck, Coz.

Romeo rises, Benvolio follows.

 ROMEO

 Ay me! Sad hours seem long.

Romeo stops as if taking in Benvolio for the first time.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Was that my father that went hence

 so fast?

 BENVOLIO

 (guilty)

 It was.

Benvolio chases Romeo down the path which divides the beach

from a string of cheap souvenir shops and sleazy bars.

 BENVOLIO

 What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

 ROMEO

 Not having that which having makes

 them short.

 BENVOLIO

 In love?

 ROMEO

 Out.

 BENVOLIO

 Of love?

 ROMEO

 Out of her favor where I am in love.

 BENVOLIO

 Alas that love, so gentle in his

 view,

 Should be so tyrannical and rough

 in proof!

 ROMEO

 Alas that love, whose view...

Romeo is halted by the sight of last night's disturbance

displayed on a small TV screen in an outdoor bar.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 What fray was here?

Benvolio starts to reply.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 (angrily)

 Yet tell me not, for I have heard

 it all.

 Here's much to do with hate, but

 more with love.

Romeo turns the corner away from the beach. He strides

along the sidewalk raging.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Why then, O brawling love, O loving

 hate,

 O anything, of nothing first

 create!

 O heavy lightness, serious vanity,

 Misshapen chaos of well-seeming

 forms,

 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold

 fire, sick health,

 Still-waking sleep, that is not

 what it is!

Romeo screams at a huge bouncer who lounges in the doorway

of a sex club.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 This love feel I, that feel no love

 in this!

The bouncer's hand moves to his gun. Romeo, ignoring him,

turns on Benvolio. A mocking laughter through tears:

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Dost thou not laugh?

Benvolio, nervously eyeing the bouncer, shepherds Romeo out

of danger.

 BENVOLIO

 No, coz, I rather weep.

Romeo smiles.

 ROMEO

 Farewell, my coz.

Romeo, breaking into a jog, leaves Benvolio behind. Benvolio

pursues him down the street.

EXT. ROMEO'S CAR. DAY.

CLOSE ON: The sleeping face of a fourteen year old boy -

BALTHASAR.

PULL BACK: Balthasar sleeps on the hood of a magnificent

silver car.

Three or four kids doze on the sidewalk. As Romeo

approaches, they jump up and begin vigorously polishing the

already gleaming car.

Balthasar wakes. He springs off the hood, chases the kids

away, then, producing a huge bunch of keys, opens the car

door for Romeo.

Benvolio intercepts Romeo at the car.

 BENVOLIO

 Tell me in sadness, who is it that

 you love.

 ROMEO

 In sadness, cousin, I do love...a

 woman.

 BENVOLIO

 I aimed so near when I supposed you

 loved.

Romeo leans against the car.

 ROMEO

 A right good marksman; and she's

 fair I love.

Romeo pulls his shirt down to reveal a small shoulder tattoo.

CLOSE ON: The tattooed word; ROSALINE.

 BENVOLIO

 Rosaline!

 (he is impressed)

 A right fair mark, fair coz, is

 soonest hit.

 ROMEO

 She'll not be hit with Cupid's

 arrow.

 She hath Dian's wit,

 And in strong proof of chastity

 lives well armed.

Benvolio can't believe it.

 BENVOLIO

 Then she hath sworn that she will

 still live chaste?

 ROMEO

 She hath; and in that sparing makes

 huge waste.

Benvolio - a plan.

 BENVOLIO

 Be ruled by me; forget to think of

 her.

 ROMEO

 O, teach me how I should forget to

 think!

Benvolio indicates one of the working girls already strutting

the foot path.

 BENVOLIO

 By giving liberty unto thine eyes.

 Examine other beauties.

Romeo laughs dismissively. He throws the kids a few coins

and slides into the drivers seat. Balthasar jumps in back.

 ROMEO

 Farewell. Thou canst not teach me

 to forget.

 BENVOLIO

 I'll pay that doctrine, or else die

 in debt.

Benvolio leaps into the passenger seat of the moving vehicle.

INT. CAPULET OFFICE. DAY.

An orchestral fanfare. TRACK DOWN: Past monstrous letters

that read CAPULET and in through a window to discover

Fulgencio Capulet. He stares out the window toward the

other tallest building in Verona; the one crested with the

word MONTAGUE.

 CAPULET

 But Montague is bound as well as I,

 In penalty alike;

Capulet turns: on the other side of his desk sits DAVID

PARIS; a square-jawed young man in a red cashmere sweater.

Tea has been served from an exquisite silver tea service.

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 And 'tis not hard, I think, for me

 so old as we to keep the peace.

Dave smiles obligingly.

 DAVE

 Of honorable reckoning are you

 both,

 And pity 'tis you lived at odds so

 long.

An awkward pause: Dave sips tea, then, with a deep breath...

 DAVE (CONT.)

 But now, my lord, what say you to

 my suit?

Capulet considers the framed photograph on his desk.

 CAPULET

 But saying o'er what I have said

 before;

 My child is yet a stranger in the

 world;

 Let two more summers wither in

 their pride,

 Ere we may think her ripe to be a

 bride.

Dave is politely insistent.

 DAVE

 Younger than she are happy mothers

 made.

 CAPULET

 (checking him hard)

 And too soon marred are those so

 early made.

 Earth hath swallowed all my hopes

 but she;

 She is the hopeful lady of my earth.

Capulet rounds the desk and places a fatherly hand on Dave's

shoulder.

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 But woo her, gentle Paris, get her

 heart.

 My will to her consent is but a

 part,

 And she agreed, within her scope of

 choice

 Lies my consent and fair according

 voice.

 This night I hold an old Accustomed

 feast.

Capulet leans close.

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 At my poor house, look to behold

 this night,

 Fresh female buds that make dark

 heaven light.

 Hear all; all see,

 And like her most whose merit most

 shall be.

Capulet smiles knowingly. Dave seems encouraged.

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 (a hearty slap)

 Come go with me!

Capulet excitedly ushers Dave from the office.

INT. POOL HALL. DAY.

Dim, smoke filled. Benvolio and Romeo play pool.

 BENVOLIO

 (chalking his cue)

 Take thou some new infection to thy

 eye.

He lines up the six ball top pocket.

 BENVOLIO (CONT.)

 And the rank poison of the old will

 die.

A hopeless shot that slams the eight ball toward the side

pocket. Romeo stops it with his hand and hurls it against

the other balls.

 BENVOLIO

 Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Romeo sinks the other balls with his hands.

 ROMEO

 Not mad, but bound more than a

 madman is;

 Shut up in prison, kept without my

 food,

Romeo stalks away from the table.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Whipped and tormented.

He stops at the gun check, rummaging in his pocket.

 ROMEO

 Good day, good fellow.

A crusty old man looks up from the small television. His

entire face a tattooed shooting target, the bullseye between

his eyes.

The old man points to the sign that reads: "No ticket no

gun." Romeo finally produces a ticket. Crusty the Target

goes out back. Romeo's attention is caught by the television.

INT. T.V. STUDIO SET. DAY

CUT TO: TELEVISION.

An ostentatious woman and her over groomed partner Rich,

hosts what looks to be a kind of Entertainment Tonight show.

The graphic behind them reads "Solemnity Nights" with Susan

Santandiago and Rich Ranchidis.

Susan speaks conspiratorially to camera.

 SUSAN

 Now I'll tell you without asking.

 The great

 Rich Capulet, holds an old

 accustomed feast;

Rich chimes in:

 RICH

 A fair Assembly.

 SUSAN

 I Pray you sir can you read?

A list of names begins to scroll across the screen. Rich

reads them off.

 RICH

 Signor Placentio and his wife and

 daughters,

 Signor Martino, the Lady Widow

 Of Utruvio and her lovely nieces,

 Rosaline and Livia...

INT. POOL HALL. DAY.

CUT TO: Benvolio, he leans into Romeo.

 BENVOLIO

 At this same ancient feast of

 Capulet's

 Sups the fair Rosaline; whom thou

 so loves,

 With all the admired beauties of

 Verona.

 Go thither, and with unattained eye

 Compare her face with some that I

 shall show,

 And I will make thee think thy swan

 a crow.

 ROMEO

 One fairer than my love?

Crusty returns. He hands the boys their guns.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 The all-seeing sun Ne'er saw her

 match since first the world begun.

CUT TO: TELEVISION.

 SUSAN

 If you be not of the house of

 Montagues,

 Come and crush a cup of wine!

 RICH

 Rest you merry!

CUT TO: Romeo, he considers.

 ROMEO

 I'll go along, no such sight to be

 shown.

 But to rejoice in splendour of mine

 own.

The boys move off.

PUSH IN ON: THE TELEVISION.

EXT. CAPULET STATE. DAY.

An aerial shot of a magnificent island estate. An Italianate

wonder of Florentine architecture. Armed guards patrol the

grounds. The telecaption reads "Capulet Mansion."

The file tape loses its television quality. We sweep down

through manicured gardens, where workers prepare decorations

for tonight's celebrations, and into the house. The music

darkens and we hear the desperate calling of a girl's name.

 VOICE OVER

 J U L I E T !

INT. CAPULET MANSION - CORRIDOR. DAY.

CUT TO: A long deserted corridor.

 VOICE OVER

 J U L I E T !

INT. CAPULET MANSION - DRAWING ROOM. DAY.

CUT TO: An echoey Chinoiserie style drawing room.

 VOICE OVER

 J U L I E T !

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

CLOSE ON: The still, serene, submerged features of a

beautiful young girl. Dark floating hair gently frames the

face. Heavy liquid eyes stare up through the water.

We hear, though faintly, the calling:

 VOICE OVER

 J U L I E T !

With a rush JULIET surfaces. As she gulps air, we realise

that she is in fact, in a bath.

We hear the calling loudly again.

 VOICE OVER

 J U L I E T !

Juliet listens. For a moment she is very still, then she

closes her eyes and slides back beneath the surface of the

water.

INT. ENTRANCE HALL CAPULET MANSION. DAY.

A Gothic, unfriendly environment heavy with religious

iconography. The entrance hall is crowded with workers and

servants preparing for tonight's party.

Gloria Capulet fiddles with a short black wig in the hallway

mirror. She is attired in full Cleopatra costume.

Dissatisfied with the wig, she rips it from her head and

calls maniacally.

 GLORIA

 J U L I E T !

Gloria is met by the NURSE, a fat, grandmotherly Hispanic

woman.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Nurse, where's my daughter? Call

 her forth to me.

 NURSE

 I bade her come. God forbid!

 Where's this girl?

 Juliet!

CUT TO: The top of the stairs. As if from nowhere, Juliet

has appeared. She wears a bathrobe and her hair is wet.

 JULIET

 (coolly)

 Madam, I am here. What is you will.

Gloria, startled, sweeps up the stairs and shuffles her

daughter toward a doorway.

 GLORIA

 Nurse, give leave awhile, we must

 talk in secret.

INT. GLORIA'S DRESSING ROOM. DAY.

Gloria shepherds Juliet into her opulent dressing room and

closes the door. She circles with nervous vexation searching

for words, stops, then suddenly opens the door and yells out

to the Nurse.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Nurse, come back again.

 I have remembered me, thou's hear

 our counsel.

The Nurse enters. Gloria, still refusing eye contact,

checks her appearance once more in the mirror. She takes a

hairbrush and, feigning pleasantness, intensely brushes her

hair.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Nurse, thou knowest my daughter's

 of a pretty age.

 NURSE

 (to Juliet)

 Thou wast the prettiest babe that

 e'er I nursed.

The hair brush clatters onto the dresser. A moment of tense

silence. Gloria grips herself and pours a sherry.

Back still turned, she speaks to her daughter.

 GLORIA

 By my count, I was your mother much

 upon these years

 That you are now a maid.

A nembutal twists like a pin in the corner of Gloria's mouth.

She slugs it down with the sherry and turns abruptly to face

Juliet.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Thus then in brief, the valiant

 Paris seeks you for his love.

CUT TO: Juliet; an uncomprehending stare.

The Nurse, caught off guard, tries to buoy the situation.

 NURSE

 A man, young lady! Lady, such a

 man

 As all the world - why, he's a man

 of wax.

The medication takes immediate effect upon Gloria. She

joins Juliet on the couch and coos in Paris's favour.

 GLORIA

 Verona's summer hath not such a

 flower.

 NURSE

 Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a

 very flower.

 GLORIA

 This night you shall behold him at

 our feast;

 Read o'er the volume of young

 Paris' face

 And find delight writ there with

 beauty's pen.

 This precious book of love, this

 unbound lover,

 To beautify him only lacks a cover.

 So shall you share all that he doth

 possess,

 By having him, making yourself no

 less.

Gloria probes Juliet's thoughts.

 GLORIA

 Can you like of Paris' love?

Juliet, adept at negotiating her mother's strange moods,

chooses her words precisely.

 JULIET

 I'll look to like, if looking

 liking move,

 But no more deep will I endart mine

 eye,

 Than your consent gives strength to

 make it fly.

PETER the chauffeur enters.

 PETER

 Madam. The guests are come.

 GLORIA

 (checks the mirror)

 We follow thee.

She exits, Nurse in tow.

CLOSE ON: Juliet stares out the windows and across the water.

Suddenly the Nurse's face leers into shot. She whispers

enthusiastically into Juliet's ear.

 NURSE

 Go girl, seek happy nights to happy

 days.

CLOSE ON: Juliet's face.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION. DAY/NIGHT.

JUMP CUT: Aerial shot of Capulet Mansion. We time lapse

from late afternoon to night; fairy lights illuminate,

guests appear, music swells, and a single incandescent

flare, explodes pink against the inky sky.

EXT. BEACH. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Romeo: his face glows pink. He is sitting on the

grubby shoreline of Verona Bay dressed as a boy King Arthur,

with fake chain mail and sword.

Romeo watches the dying flare sink into the bay. The sound

of the party drifts across the water. Balthasar, dressed as

Frankenstein's monster, touches a lighter to a large bong

and Romeo inhales smoke.

Behind them, Benvolio, drunk and dressed as a pizza, is

yelling at Gregory, who, dressed as a Viking, is trying to

cut slices off his pizza costume. Sampson, also dressed as

a Viking, sits in the back of a car. One arm is bandaged

and he swigs from a bottle.

Suddenly the darkness is slashed by headlights. A reckless

sports car speeds toward the boys. Stereo screaming, the

car skids to a halt.

CLOSE ON: Music blares from the sound system. A silver

stilettoed foot emerges from the car and plants itself

firmly in the dirt.

CUT TO: The boys, eyes wide with amazement.

CUT TO: Another stiletto follows the first. Guitar groans.

PAN: Slowly up a shapely pair of black stockinged legs, past

a hint of garter belt to a black sequined mini-skirt and up

over a muscular dark skinned stomach and tiny sequined bra

top, to discover: the 21 year old male, African American

face of MERCUTIO.

CUT TO: The boys. Recovering from the initial shock, they

laugh and cat-call raucously.

CUT TO: Mercutio. He roughly jams a short black wig onto

his head and yells above the music.

 MERCUTIO

 Strike drum!

Mercutio magically produces invitations from somewhere

within his mini-skirt and dances down the beach to the boys.

Aggressively bumping and grinding, Mercutio distributes the

invitations. Reaching Romeo, he declares:

 MERCUTIO

 We'll on without apology.

Romeo lets the invitation fall to the sand.

 ROMEO

 I am not for this ambling.

 Being but heavy, I will bear the

 light.

Romeo pulls on the bong once more.

Suddenly, Mercutio is upon Romeo. Hauling him to his feet,

he waltzes him through the sand.

 MERCUTIO

 Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you

 dance.

Romeo pushes Mercutio away.

 ROMEO

 Not I, believe me. You have

 dancing shoes

 With nimble soles. I have a soul

 of lead.

Mercutio in mock sympathy.

 MERCUTIO

 Too great oppression for a tender

 thing.

 ROMEO

 Is love a tender thing? It is too

 rough, too rude, too boisterous,

 and it pricks like thorn.

Romeo lies staring up at the stars.

 MERCUTIO

 If love be rough with you, be rough

 with love.

Mercutio jumps on Romeo.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Prick love for pricking, and you

 beat love down.

Romeo fights Mercutio off.

 ROMEO

 Under love's heavy burden do I sink!

CUT TO: Benvolio, impatiently honking the horn.

 BENVOLIO

 Every man betake him to his legs!

Mercutio heads Romeo toward the car.

 MERCUTIO

 Come, we burn daylight, ho!

Romeo pulls away.

 ROMEO

 But 'tis no wit to go.

Mercutio turns, exasperated.

 MERCUTIO

 Why, may one ask?

 ROMEO

 I dreamt a dream tonight.

 MERCUTIO

 And so did I.

 ROMEO

 Well, what was yours?

 MERCUTIO

 That dreamers often lie.

 ROMEO

 In bed asleep, while they do dream

 things true.

Mercutio produces a tiny gold pill case.

 MERCUTIO

 O, then I see Queen Mab hath been

 with you.

 She is the fairies' midwife, and

 she comes

 In shape no bigger than an agate

 stone

 On the forefinger of an alderman,

 Drawn with a team of little atomies

 Over men's noses as they lie asleep.

Tantalisingly, he passes the case beneath Romeo's nose.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,

 Her wagoner a small gray-coated gnat.

With a conjurer's dexterity Mercutio extracts a small, gray

pill.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 And in this state she gallops night

 by night

 Through lovers' brains, and then

 they dream of love;

He palms the pills. It reappears from behind Romeo's ear.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 O'er lawyers' fingers who straight

 dream on fees;

 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on

 kisses dream,

 Which oft the angry Mab with

 blisters plagues.

 Because their breaths with

 sweetmeats tainted are.

The pill box glints in the moonlight.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Sometime she driveth o'er a

 soldier's neck;

 And then dreams he of cutting

 foreign throats.

 And being thus frighted, swears a

 prayer or two

 And sleeps again.

Mercutio now intensely angry:

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 This is that very Mab

 That plaits the manes of horses in

 the night

 And bakes the elf-locks in foul

 sluttish hairs

He screams into the night.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 This is the hag, when maids lie on

 their backs,

 That presses them and learns them

 first to bear,

 Making them women of good carriage.

 This is she, this is she...

CLOSE ON: Mercutio. He breaks off. There is a strange

stillness amongst the group. Romeo goes to his friend.

 ROMEO

 Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace.

 Thou talkest of nothing.

Mercutio meets Romeo's gaze.

 MERCUTIO

 True, I talk of dreams;

 Which are the children of an idle

 brain,

 Begot of nothing but vain fantasy.

 Which is as thin of substance as

 the air

 And more inconstant than the wind,

 who woos

 Even now the frozen bosom of the

 north

 And, being angered, puffs away from

 thence

 Turning his attention to the dew-

 dropping south.

CUT TO: Benvolio in the car. The alcohol has caught up with

him and he looks a little queasy.

 BENVOLIO

 This wind you talk of blows us from

 ourselves:

 Supper is done and we shall come

 too late.

Romeo looks toward the distant city.

 ROMEO

 I fear, too early, for my mind

 misgives

 Some consequence yet hanging in the

 stars

 Shall bitterly begin his fearful

 date

 With this night's revels, and

 expire the term

 Of a despised life closed in my

 breast,

 By some vile forfeit of untimely

 death.

PAUSE: The water turns golden as fireworks explode across

the bay. Romeo smiles.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 But he that hath the steerage of my

 course

 Direct my sail!

He takes the pill and drops it into his mouth.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 On, lusty gentlemen!

With the rush of a mind altering cocktail, we ZOOM IN on

Romeo's eyes; they shimmer with the shooting star reflection

of exploding fireworks - a bending Eastern chord, we launch

into Donna Summer's 'I Feel Love', sung by the vocalist from

Soundgarden with orchestration by 'Deconstruction' and sitar

by Ravi Shankar.

EXT. MERCUTIO'S CAR - ON FREEWAY. NIGHT.

PULL OUT: From Romeo's eyes. He is lying in the passenger

seat of Mercutio's convertible as it rockets along the

freeway. The camera is directly above Romeo. He stares up

at the fireworks that reflect in the windshield. The car

and freeway begin to rotate and the camera follows. We feel

that the car is now travelling upside-down. The camera

sways through a brilliant explosion of fireworks that fill

the screen with a zillion pixilating, colored dots of fire.

INT. CAPULET'S MANSION - BALLROOM. NIGHT.

PULL OUT: To discover the glittering dots of fire refracting

from the sparkling domed roof of the magnificently ornate

Capulet Ballroom. The camera swoops down over bizarrely

costumed revellers cavorting to a driving Latin big band.

The camera partners with a drugged Mercutio and Benvolio who

shamelessly caper with each other in a mock antic adagio.

CUT TO: Romeo gazing blankly at the dance floor.

CUT TO: Mercutio. He sweeps up a thirty-something

sophisticate and twirls her in Romeo's direction.

 MERCUTIO

 Everyman betake him to his legs!

Romeo moves off through the crowd.

CUT TO: ROMEO'S P.O.V.: Contorted images of costumed guests

eat, drink and laugh in a grotesque collision of Yves Saint

Laurent cocktail party and Bacchanalian romp.

Suddenly a large arm coils around Romeo's neck.

DISTORTED EXTREME CLOSE UP: A seriously intoxicated Fulgencio

Capulet; his puffy red face squeezes against Romeo's.

 CAPULET

 Ah, I have seen the day that I

 could

 Tell a whispering tale in a fair

 ladies ear.

 Such as would please.

Capulet screams above the music:

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 Come musicians play!

Blood drums in Romeo's ears. Breaking free from Capulet's

grasp as he pushes through the crowd toward the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Silent, underwater shot. Romeo's tranquil features submerged

in a basin of water.

BEAT.

With a gasp, Romeo rises. A moment. His breathing calms.

Then, smoothing water into his hair, he gazes into the

bathroom mirror. He turns:

The entire wall opposite the mirror, is a magnificent salt-

water fish tank.

Romeo, drawn by it's submarine beauty, leans against the

fish tank. Applause echoes faintly through the bathroom

speakers.

INT. BALLROOM. NIGHT.

As the applause dies, a dark-haired Latina Diva takes the

spotlight. The band ease into the opening bars of a love

ballad.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

As the music swells, Romeo watches a moustached catfish

glide past a medieval castle.

Suddenly, Romeo pulls away. Peering back at him through the

castle is a pair of exquisitely beautiful angelic eyes.

The Diva's first pure, achingly beautiful notes soar.

Confused, Romeo looks again. There is no mistake - it is a

girl. Through a shimmering curtain of ribbon weed, two dark

wide eyes, a childish nose and sumptuous full lips.

Romeo pushes his face closer to the glass. The other face

snaps abruptly away.

INT. POWDER ROOM. NIGHT.

CUT TO: Juliet, dressed as an angel, on the other side of

the tank. We now realise that the girls' powder room and

the boys' bathroom are divided by this watery wonder world.

Juliet warily moves closer to the glass.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Romeo leans his face against the glass. The love ballad

builds.

SLOW TRACK: From Romeo's profile, in through the water, and...

INT. POWDER ROOM. NIGHT.

...out the other side, to find Juliet in profile, peering

into the tank.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Romeo presses his nose lightly against the glass.

INT. POWDER ROOM. NIGHT.

Juliet; a tiny smile.

Suddenly, CRASH! The door slams open. Juliet turns,

startled. It is the Nurse.

 NURSE

 Juliet, your mother calls.

The Nurse bustles Juliet out the door. Juliet looks over

her shoulder at the mystery boy.

INT. BALLROOM. NIGHT.

Romeo, now without his mask, slams out of the bathroom -

Juliet and the Nurse have disappeared into the crowd.

CUT TO: Juliet being dragged along by the Nurse. She

glances back toward the mystery boy, but he is gone.

Juliet and the Nurse rejoin Dave Paris, who is dressed as an

astronaut, and Gloria, at the side of the dance floor.

Dave, irresistible smile, extends his hand to Juliet.

 DAVE

 Will you now deny to dance?

Juliet looks to Dave, desperately searching for a reason to

decline. Gloria, brushing aside her silly daughter's

protests, slugs the last of her champagne and corrals them

onto the dance floor.

 GLORIA

 (whispering to Juliet)

 A man, young lady, such a man.

As Juliet is dragged onto the floor her eyes furtively

search for the boy.

CUT TO: Romeo in the crowd. Desperate to find the girl, he

roughly shunts aside a reveller dressed as Lucifer, Prince

of Darkness.

HOLD ON: Lucifer. He removes his mask: it is Tybalt. He

turns to Abra, who's dressed as a demon.

 TYBALT

 What, dares the slave come hither

 to fleer and scorn at our solemnity?

 Now by the stock and honor of my

 kin

 To strike him dead I hold it not a

 sin.

Tybalt moves off aggressively, but is halted as Capulet

slams a hand into his chest.

 CAPULET

 Why how now kinsman, wherefore

 storm you so?

 TYBALT

 Uncle, this is that villain Romeo.

 A Montague, our foe.

Capulet peers across the ballroom.

 CAPULET

 Young Romeo is it?

 TYBALT

 'Tis he.

 CAPULET

 Content thee gentle coz, let him

 alone.

 I would not for the wealth of all

 this town

 Here in my house do him

 disparagement.

 Therefore be patient; take no note

 of him.

Tybalt can't believe it.

 TYBALT

 I'll not endure him.

CLOSE ON: Capulet, exploding with rage.

 CAPULET

 He shall be endured!

 (slapping Tybalt viciously)

 What, goodman boy! I say he shall!

 Go to.

Capulet violently shoves Tybalt to the ground.

 CAPULET

 You'll make a mutiny among my guests!

A middle aged couple look on shocked - Capulet waves to them

festively:

 CAPULET

 What? Cheerly my hearts!

Capulet snorts at Tybalt in disgust.

 CAPULET

 You'll not endure him! Am I the

 master here or you? Go to.

Smoothing his hair into place, Capulet turns back into the

ballroom.

CLOSE ON: Tybalt choking back tears of rage.

CUT TO: Romeo moving through the crowd. For a moment the

crush clears and he spies the Angel on the dance floor.

CLOSE ON: Romeo whispers:

 ROMEO

 Did my heart love till now?

 Forswear it, sight.

 For I ne'er saw true beauty till

 this night.

Romeo begins to circumnavigate the dance floor in an attempt

to get closer to Juliet.

CUT TO: Dave slow dancing with Juliet.

Juliet's eyes search the room for the boy.

CLOSE ON: Romeo.

CLOSE ON: Juliet.

Their eyes connect.

Juliet looks quickly back to Dave who, oblivious, returns

his most devastating smile.

CUT TO: The songstress, her voice soars.

CUT TO: Juliet. Unable to look away from the boy, she

stares over Dave's shoulder.

CUT TO: Romeo. Ignoring the danger, he continues to move

toward the Angel.

With the Diva's spiralling final notes, the ballad concludes.

A complete black out. As the crowd break into wild applause,

Juliet's eyes search the darkness, but the boy is gone.

The crowd cheers and screams its applause. An avalanche of

balloons, tinsel and confetti rains down from the roof;

swathes of red silk drop from the ceiling and the space is

transformed.

CLOSE ON: Juliet, searching for the boy.

Suddenly: A gasp, Juliet's eyes widen, shocked.

In the dark, a hand has shot out from the drape curtaining

off the stage and clasped hers. Juliet barely dares breathe.

She glances furtively to Dave Paris - he watches the stage.

Slowly Juliet turns toward the hand; there through a break

in the curtain she can see eye, cheek and lips of the

mystery boy. As the Diva reprises the chorus, Romeo gently

pulls Juliet behind the curtain.

INT. BEHIND CURTAIN. NIGHT.

Concealed from the party by the red velvet drape, hands

still clasped, the teenagers are so close their bodies

almost touch.

 ROMEO

 If I profane with my unworthiest

 hand

 This holy shrine, the gentle sin is

 this.

 My lips, two blushing pilgrims,

 ready stand

 To smooth that rough touch with a

 tender kiss.

Romeo moves his lips toward Juliet's. She stops him.

 JULIET

 Good pilgrim, you do wrong your

 hand too much,

 Which mannerly devotion shows in

 this.

 For saints have hands that pilgrim's

 hands do touch,

 And palm to palm is holy palmers'

 kiss.

 ROMEO

 Have not saints lips, and holy

 palmers too?

 JULIET

 (a gentle scolding)

 Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must

 use in prayer.

 ROMEO

 O, then, dear saint, let lips do

 what hands do,

 They pray: grant thou, lest faith

 turn to despair.

 JULIET

 Saints do not move, though grant

 for prayer's sake.

 ROMEO

 Then move not while my prayer's

 effect I take.

He kisses her.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Thus from my lips, by thine my sin

 is purged.

 JULIET

 Then have my lips the sin that they

 have took.

 ROMEO

 Sin from my lips? O trespass

 sweetly urged!

 Give me my sin again.

He kisses her.

 JULIET

 You kiss by th' book.

They kiss again.

Suddenly a harsh light falls across the entwined couple.

They break apart - Nurse has pulled open the curtain and

stands eyeing them severely.

 NURSE

 Madam, your mother craves a word

 with you.

We see that the party is breaking up. But for groups of

die-hard revellers, the room is nearly empty.

 NURSE (CONT.)

 Come, let's away.

She takes firm control of her charge.

Juliet furtively motions for the startled Romeo not to

follow as he trails them across the room.

CUT TO: ROMEO'S P.O.V.: The Nurse and Juliet reach the door,

but instead of leaving, they turn and ascend the staircase

that arcs around to the mezzanine level. They join a vexed

Gloria Capulet who clings to a patient Dave Paris.

Inaudible words are exchanged. Juliet flickers her eyes

nervously to Romeo.

CUT TO: Romeo. He halts at the foot of the stairs unsure.

CUT TO: Gloria. Catching Juliet's interest in the boy, she

indicates to her daughter to 'COME ALONG'.

CUT TO: Romeo; a dawning realisation.

 ROMEO

 (under his breath)

 Is she a Capulet?

CUT TO: Juliet. She stops and turns back.

CUT TO: Romeo, comprehending the reality of who she is.

CUT TO: Juliet. The Nurse whispers in her ear.

 NURSE

 His name is Romeo, and a Montague,

 The only son of your great enemy.

An orchestral treatment of Joy Division's "Love will tear us

Apart" swells;

HOLD ON: Juliet. Like a cloud passing across the sun, a

dark coldness descends upon her.

CUT TO: Mercutio. He throws himself upon the shell shocked

Romeo.

 MERCUTIO

 Away, begone, the sport is at its

 best.

Mercutio shuttles Romeo toward the door.

 ROMEO

 Ay so I fear,

A covert glance over his shoulder.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 The more is my unrest.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION. NIGHT.

Mercutio bundles Romeo through the front door and down the

stairs to the waiting getaway car.

INT. CAPULET MANSION - STAIRS ALCOVE WINDOW - NIGHT.

CUT TO: Juliet. Manoeuvred by the Nurse up the stairs, she

breaks away and rushes to a tiny, windowed alcove.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - MAIN ENTRANCE. NIGHT.

CUT TO: Mercutio's convertible and its noisy confederacy

joining the line of departing limos.

A huge sign combusts into blinding fireworks that write in

giant words "CAPULET."

As the convertible passes beneath the blazing words, Romeo

turns. Through a deluge of falling sparks, he glimpses the

mystery girl high up in the tower.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - WINDOW. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Juliet leaning out of the tower window. Brilliant

sparkles light in her eyes.

PUSH IN: We hear her secret whisper:

 JULIET

 My only love, sprung from my only

 hate.

 Too early seen unknown, and known

 too late.

 Prodigious birth of love it is to me

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - MAIN ENTRANCE DRIVE. NIGHT.

CUT TO: JULIET'S P.O.V.: In slow motion Romeo, through the

falling curtain of fiery embers.

 JULIET (CONT.)(V/O)

 That I must love a loathed enemy.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - WINDOW. NIGHT.

Warm wind blows the smoke from the expended fireworks.

Juliet closes the window and leans against the glass.

CRANE DOWN: The side of the building past revellers who

don't know when to leave. Standing in the front doorway is

someone else who cannot take their eyes off the departing

Romeo. It is Tybalt. The music darkens as we push through

the smoky wind.

 TYBALT

 I will withdraw. But this intrusion

 shall,

 Now seeming sweet, convert to

 bitterest gall.

INT. MERCUTIO'S CAR. NIGHT.

Caught in the jam of departing vehicles, Mercutio's car

crawls along the bridge that links Capulet island with the

mainland. The boys sing along raucously with the radio.

 BOYS

 "I am a pretty piece of flesh,

 I am a pretty piece of flesh..."

PUSH IN: On Romeo, he whispers:

 ROMEO

 Can I go forward when my heart is

 here?

 Turn back, dull earth, and find thy

 centre out.

Romeo leaps from the car. Benvolio yells after him.

 BENVOLIO

 Romeo! Cousin Romeo! Romeo!

EXT. CAPULET BRIDGE. NIGHT.

Romeo runs back along the bridge toward the estate. At the

gates, armed guards supervise the exodus of vehicles. Romeo

uses the traffic to shield himself from view.

Romeo leaps from the bridge and into the shadows at the base

of the high stone wall that borders the compound.

EXT. CAPULET BRIDGE. NIGHT.

Mercutio's car prowls back along the bridge. The last

guests have departed and the gates are swinging shut. The

convertible halts in front of them.

 BENVOLIO

 He ran this way. Call, good

 Mercutio.

 MERCUTIO

 Nay, I'll conjure too.

Mercutio leaps from the car. He postures like a magician in

a low-budget variety special. The boys cheer him on.

 MERCUTIO

 Romeo! Humours! Madman! Passion!

 Lover!

 I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright

 eyes,

 By her high forehead and her

 scarlet lip,

 By her fine foot, straight leg, and

 quivering thigh.

 And the demesnes that there adjacent

 lie,

 That in thy likeness thou appear to

 us!

EXT. CAPULET WALL. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Romeo's fake chain mail shirt tangled in the

barbed wire at the top of the wall.

PAN DOWN: Romeo, now on the other side of the wall, pulls up

his undershirt and gingerly inspects the cuts inflicted by

the wire.

Mercutio's cavorting echoes from the bridge. Romeo smiles

ironically.

 ROMEO

 He jests at scars that never felt a

 wound.

Romeo moves off through the darkened grounds of Capulet

estate.

EXT. CAPULET BRIDGE. NIGHT.

The boys laugh hysterically as Mercutio staggers around the

bridge in imitation of a love sick fool.

 MERCUTIO

 O Romeo, that she were, O that she

 were

 An open-arse and thou a poperin pear!

The hilarity is abruptly arrested as a security spotlight

blazes to life, pinning Mercutio in its beam. The sound of

automatic weapons cocking pierces the night.

CLOSE ON: Mercutio. He's brave but not stupid. He gets

back into the car.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Come, shall we go?

EXT. THE BACK OF CAPULET MANSION. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A pair of stone cherubs on top of the retaining

wall of a terraced garden. Romeo's face appears between them.

Romeo hauls himself up onto the wall. Below is a Greco-

Roman style pool area. To the right the darkened rear wing

of Capulet Mansion. Suddenly the back of the house explodes

with light. Romeo takes cover.

 ROMEO

 But soft, what light through yonder

 window breaks?

Romeo's question is answered as out onto the verandah comes

Juliet. She is still clad in her angel robe, but without

the halo and wings. She slowly descends to pool level.

 ROMEO

 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.

Juliet stands on the top step of the pool stairs. She is

directly below Romeo as he whispers.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Cast it off!

Juliet sits on the edge of the pool, her legs dangle in the

water.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

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

 O that she knew she were!

Juliet sighs.

 JULIET

 Ay me!

 ROMEO

 (whispers)

 She speaks.

 O, speak again, bright angel!

Juliet looks longingly toward the stars.

 JULIET

 O Romeo, Romeo! - Whyfore 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.

CLOSE ON: Romeo. Incredulous.

 ROMEO

 Shall I hear more, or shall I speak

 at this?

 JULIET

 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.

 Thou are thyself, though not a

 Montague.

 What's Montague? It is not 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 word would smell as

 sweet.

 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo

 called,

 Retain that dear perfection which

 he owes

 Without that title. Romeo, doff

 thy name,

 And for thy name, which is no part

 of thee,

 Take all myself.

Romeo wildly calls:

 ROMEO

 I take thee at thy word!

 Call me but love, and I'll be new

 baptised.

 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Romeo jumps down from the wall. Juliet screams, and turns,

toppling backwards. Romeo grabs her hand but her momentum

overbalances him and they both plunge headlong into the pool.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - POOL - UNDERWATER. NIGHT.

Underwater shot: A slow motion phosphorescent tangle of

arms, legs and bodies.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - BACK GARDEN. NIGHT.

CUT TO: A security guard. Alerted by the noise he moves

toward the pool area.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION - POOL GARDEN - NIGHT.

CUT TO: Above water, real time: Romeo and Juliet surface

spluttering. Juliet thrashes the water in an attempt to get

distance from her attacker.

 JULIET

 What man art thou that, thus

 bescreened in night,

 So stumblest on my counsel?

Romeo: A calming gesture as he tries to tread water.

 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.

The ferocious barking of a guard dog arrests the teenagers

attention. A moment, then they slide beneath the water.

CUT TO: The security guard and dog appearing above the pool

area.

GUARD'S P.O.V.: The rippling surface of the water.

CUT TO - UNDERWATER SHOT: Romeo and Juliet submerged, hair

streaming, stare at each other like two beautiful fish.

CUT TO: The guard. He can see noisy caterers cleaning up

around the other side of the house. Frowning, he returns

the way he came.

CUT TO: Romeo and Juliet. Gasping for air, they cautiously

surface. A moment - then Juliet, a small smile.

 JULIET

 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

 ROMEO

 Neither, fair maid, if either thee

 dislike.

Juliet looks nervously toward the house. She drags Romeo

toward a small grotto at the end of the pool.

 JULIET

 How cam'st thou hither, tell me,

 and whyfore?

 The garden walls are high and hard

 to climb,

 And the place death, considering

 who thou art.

 ROMEO

 (with splashy bravado)

 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 stop

 to me.

Juliet drags Romeo firmly into the grotto.

 JULIET

 (a real fear)

 If they do see thee, they will

 murder thee.

Romeo slowly pulls Juliet toward him.

 ROMEO

 I have night's cloak to hide me

 from their eyes.

 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.

The lovers kiss long and deep. Then Juliet, suddenly

fearful, pushes Romeo away.

 JULIET

 Thou knowest the mask of night is

 on my face,

 Else would a maiden blush bepaint

 my cheek,

 For that which thou hast heard me

 speak tonight.

 Fain would I dwell on form - fain,

 fain deny

 What I have spoke. But farewell

 compliment!

 Dost thou love me?

Romeo tries to speak, Juliet silences him.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 I know thou wilt say 'Ay', and I

 will take thy word. Yet, if thou

 swearest,

 Thou mayst prove false. 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, and

 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

 'haviour light.

 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove

 more true

 Than those that have more cunning

 to be strange.

 ROMEO

 Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,

 That tips with silver all these

 fruit-tree tops -

 JULIET

 O, swear not by the moon, th'

 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.

She touches his cheek. Romeo moves his lips close.

 ROMEO

 If my heart's dear love -

Confused, Juliet breaks away.

 JULIET

 Well, do not swear. Although I joy

 in thee,

 I have no joy of this contract

 tonight.

 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.

She rushes up the stairs - Romeo follows desperately.

 ROMEO

 O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Juliet - a shocked look.

 JULIET

 What satisfaction canst thou have

 tonight?

CLOSE ON: Romeo.

 ROMEO

 The exchange of thy love's faithful

 vow for mine.

CLOSE ON: Juliet. She runs joyously to Romeo.

 JULIET

 I gave thee mind before thou didst

 request it!

Kissing him passionately.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 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.

They kiss again. The Nurse calls from inside.

 NURSE (O/S)

 Juliet!

Juliet looks to the house.

 JULIET

 (breathlessly)

 Three words, dear Romeo, and good

 night indeed.

 If that thy bent of love be

 honourable.

 Thy purpose marriage, send me word

 tomorrow,

 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 (O/S)

 Madam!

 JULIET

 I come, anon - But if thou meanest

 not well,

 I do beseech thee...

 NURSE (O/S)

 Madam!

 JULIET

 (to Nurse)

 By and by I come!

 To cease thy strife and leave me to

 my grief.

 Tomorrow will I send.

Romeo holds Juliet's gaze.

 ROMEO

 So thrive my soul.

 NURSE (O/S)

 Madam!

Juliet breaks away.

 JULIET

 A thousand times good night!

With a final kiss, Juliet runs inside.

 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.

Juliet re-appears at the upper balcony.

 JULIET

 Romeo! What o'clock tomorrow

 Shall I send to thee?

 ROMEO

 By the hour of nine.

Juliet unclasps a delicate silver necklace from around her

neck.

 JULIET

 I will not fail. 'Tis twenty year

 till then.

 Goodnight, goodnight! Parting is

 such sweet sorrow.

 That I shall say goodnight till it

 be morrow.

She lets the necklace fall from her hand. Romeo catches it

and she is gone.

 ROMEO

 Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace

 in thy breast,

 Would I were sleep and peace, so

 sweet to rest.

INT. GREENHOUSE. DAWN.

Morning sunlight filters through the lush foliage of a

tropical rainforest.

PAN DOWN: As we hear:

 FATHER LAURENCE (O/S)

 O mickle is the powerful grace that

 lies

 In plants, herbs, stones, and their

 true qualities.

We discover the intensely concentrating features of FATHER

LAURENCE. Fifties, wiry and wearing a priest's collar,

Laurence delicately makes an incision in the bulb of a small

purple flowered plant.

A pair of fresh faced ten year old boys look on in wonderment

as a vivid blue sap oozes from the incision.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Within the infant rind of this weak

 flower

 Poison hath residence, and medicine

 power.

PULL BACK: The Priest carefully gathers the sap into a

beaker. We discover that we are in a small tropical

greenhouse.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 (to the boys)

 For this, being smelt, with that

 part cheers each part;

 Being tasted, stays all senses with

 the heart.

The boys follow the Father as he moves out of the greenhouse

and into an adjoining work area. The walls are lined with

bottles of herbs and dried plants and a television flickers

in the corner.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 For naught so vile on the earth

 doth live,

 But to the earth some special good

 doth give;

With the precision of a chemist, Father Laurence funnels the

sap into a small bottle and places it in the refrigerator.

From out of the refrigerator he produces a large jar of

candy. He eyes the boys sternly.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Nor aught so good but, strained

 from that fair use,

 Revolts from true birth, stumbling

 on abuse.

The boys take their candy and scram.

CUT TO: The muted television. A morning news program shows

footage of a murder scene cordoned off with police tape. A

distraught mother is being restrained.

CLOSE ON: The priest contemplating the television.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 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.

A feverish knocking breaks the priest's reverie.

 ROMEO (O/S)

 Good morrow, father!

Father Laurence snaps off the television and exits the

workroom.

EXT. WALL. DAWN.

Romeo, dressed in last night's chain mail, pounds desperately

on a wooden door set into a high stone wall.

 ROMEO

 Good morrow, father!

EXT. COURTYARD. DAWN.

From the workroom, Father Laurence enters a courtyard which

encloses a tranquil tropical garden. He opens a door in the

wall of the courtyard and smiles as the costumed Romeo

bursts in.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Benedicite!

 What early tongue so sweet saluteth

 me?

Without pausing, the priest continues through the courtyard

and toward the church.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Young son, it argues a distempered

 head

 So soon to bid good morrow to thy

 bed.

 Or if not so, then here I hit it

 right -

 Our Romeo hath not been in bed

 tonight.

The priest enters the back of the church.

INT. SACRISTY. DAWN.

Romeo, on fire to tell of his experience, follows the priest

into the sacristy.

 ROMEO

 The last is true. The sweeter rest

 was mine.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 (he stops)

 God pardon sin! Wast thou with

 Rosaline?

 ROMEO

 With Rosaline, my ghostly father?

 No.

 I have forgot that name and that

 name's woe.

The Father lays out the cut glass bottles and communion tray

for mass.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 That's my good son! But where hast

 thou been then?

Unconsciously, Romeo helps the priest prepare. It is clear

he knows the routine by heart.

 ROMEO

 I have been feasting with mine

 enemy,

 Where on a sudden one hath wounded

 me.

 That's by me wounded. Both our

 remedies

 Within they help and holy physic

 lies.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 (buttoning a long

 black cassock)

 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.

 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.

CUT TO: The Priest, thunderstruck. The two kids, now

dressed in red altar-boy robes, enter.

 ALTAR BOYS

 Good morrow, Romeo.

The apoplectic priest waves the boys away. They get the

message and bolt.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Holy Saint Francis! What a change

 is here!

 Is Rosaline, that thou didst love

 so dear,

 So soon foresaken? Young men's

 love then lies

 Not truly in their hearts, but in

 their eyes.

 ROMEO

 Thou chid'st me oft for loving

 Rosaline.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 (very angry)

 For doting, not for loving, pupil

 mine.

 ROMEO

 I pray thee chide me not. Her I

 love now

 Doth grace for grace and love for

 love allow.

 The other did not so.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 O, she knew well

 Thy love did read by rote, that

 could not spell.

The Father falls into a chair and considers. He looks

through the sacristy door to where a small children's choir

has assembled. Their angelic voices soar into the purest of

hymns.

 CHOIR

 How can you just leave me standing

 Alone in a world so cold,

 Maybe I'm just too demanding,

 Maybe I'm just like my father, too

 bold,

 Maybe you're just like my mother,

 She's never satisfied.

 Why do we scream at each other?

 This is what it sounds like when

 doves cry...

We recognise the hymn as "When Doves Cry" by Prince.

PUSH IN: On the Priest; moved, he looks to Romeo.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 But come, young waverer, come, go

 with me.

 In one respect I'll thy assistant

 be.

 For this alliance may so happy

 prove

 To turn your households' rancor to

 pure love.

Romeo hurriedly assists the priest with his vestments.

 ROMEO

 O, let us hence! I stand on sudden

 haste.

Father Laurence holds Romeo in his powerful gaze.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Wisely and slow. They stumble that

 run fast.

The procession is joined by the two little altar boys and

the mass begins.

EXT. VERONA BEACH. DAY.

As the Angelic voices of the choir soar, we see a pay phone

etched with hyper-real starkness against the white sand,

green sea and blue sky.

A single leaning palm tree frames the image like a ridiculous

tourist postcard.

Benvolio speaks on the pay phone. Mercutio, torso naked but

for his holstered Sports Rapier 9mm, drums his fingers on

the side of the booth.

 MERCUTIO

 Where the devil should this Romeo

 be?

 Came he not home tonight?

 BENVOLIO

 (slamming down the phone)

 Not to his father's. I spoke with

 his man.

Mercutio storms off down the beach.

 MERCUTIO

 Why, that same pale hard-hearted

 wench, that Rosaline,

 Torments him so that he will sure

 run mad.

 BENVOLIO

 (running to keep up)

 Tybalt hath sent a letter to his

 father's house.

 MERCUTIO

 (halts abruptly)

 A challenge, on my life.

CLOSE ON: Benvolio, unsure.

 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 clamps Benvolio into a headlock.

 MERCUTIO

 Alas, poor Romeo, he is already

 dead!

 Stabbed with a white wench's black

 eye,

He whispers into Benvolio's ear:

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Run through the ear with a love

 song.

 (in disgust)

 And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

 BENVOLIO

 (struggling to break free)

 Why, what is Tybalt?

 MERCUTIO

 (releasing him)

 More than Prince of Cats, I can

 tell you.

 O, he's the courageous captain of

 compliments.

 The very butcher of a silk button.

Lightening fast, Mercutio draws his gun. He twirls it in an

impressive display of gunmanship which ends with the barrel

between the startled Benvolio's eyes.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 A duellist, a duellist.

Romeo's car pulls into the beach side parking lot. Benvolio

heads toward it.

 BENVOLIO

 Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo!

EXT. BEACH - PARKING LOT. DAY.

Romeo alights from his car and throws his keys to Balthasar

who lounges outside the beach side hang. Mercutio saunters

up the beach with mock nonchalance.

 MERCUTIO

 Signor Romeo, Bonjour. There's a

 French salutation to your French

 slop. You gave us the counterfeit

 fairly last night.

 ROMEO

 Good morrow to you both. What

 counterfeit did I give you?

 MERCUTIO

 The slip, sir, the slip. Can you

 not conceive?

Romeo smiles smugly.

 ROMEO

 Pardon, good Mercutio. My business

 was great, and in such a case as

 mine a man may strain courtesy.

 MERCUTIO

 (sarcastically)

 A most courteous exposition.

 ROMEO

 Nay I am the very pink of courtesy.

 MERCUTIO

 (camply)

 Pink for flower?

The boys laugh. Romeo feigns anger.

 ROMEO

 I will bite thee on the ear for

 that jest!

Mercutio, goading Romeo to follow, backs off down the beach.

 MERCUTIO

 Come between us, good Benvolio! My

 wits faint.

Mercutio flicks sand at Romeo, then sprints off down the

beach. Romeo, laughing, gives chase.

 ROMEO

 Switch and spurs, switch and spurs,

 or I'll cry a match.

EXT. BEACH - SHORELINE. DAY.

Romeo is gaining on Mercutio, who runs headlong into the sea.

With a yell, Romeo dives in after him.

EXT. BEACH - AT SEA. DAY.

Mercutio splashes the laughing Romeo.

 MERCUTIO

 Why, is not this better now than

 groaning for love?

Romeo tries to dunk Mercutio.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Now art thou sociable.

Mercutio, evading, heads for shore.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Now art thou Romeo. Now art thou...

EXT. BEACH - SHORELINE. DAY.

Romeo tackles Mercutio on the wet sand. Mercutio falls

suddenly serious.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 (quietly)

 What thou art, by art as well as by

 nature.

A moment between the boys. A shadow falls across them.

Romeo looks up.

 ROMEO

 Here's goodly gear.

Standing above the boys is the Nurse. She wears a

ridiculous, all red, "Jackie O" style disguise of sunglasses,

scarf and parasol.

 MERCUTIO

 (bemused)

 God ye good e'en fair gentlewoman.

The nurse, ignoring Mercutio, speaks dramatically to Romeo.

 NURSE

 I desire some confidence with you.

She turns and walks back to the parking lot where Peter the

chauffer waits beside the limousine.

Benvolio and the other boys look on curiously.

 MERCUTIO

 A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

But Romeo rises and to the amazement of Mercutio actually

follows this woman. Mercutio looks questioningly to

Benvolio, who shrugs.

 BENVOLIO

 She will endite him to some supper?

Even more strangely, Romeo gets into the limousine.

 MERCUTIO

 (taken by surprise)

 Romeo, will you come to your

 father's?

 We'll to dinner thither.

 ROMEO

 (as he closes the door)

 I will follow you.

 MERCUTIO

 Farewell, ancient lady. Farewell.

The car pulls away.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

The limousine drives through Verona Beach.

INT. MOVING LIMOUSINE. DAY.

CLOSE ON: Romeo jammed into the corner of the seat. The

Nurse's face is pressed alarmingly close to his. She speaks

in cold deadly earnest.

 NURSE

 If ye should lead her in a fool's

 paradise, as they say, it were a

 very gross kind of behavior, as

 they say. For the gentlewoman is

 young; and therefore, if you should

 deal double with her, truly it were

 an ill thing and very weak dealing.

BEAT: Romeo chooses his words carefully.

 ROMEO

 Bid her to come to confession this

 afternoon,

 And there she shall at Friar

 Laurence's cell

 Be shrived and

 (PUSH IN ON: Romeo)

 married.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. DAY.

CLOSE ON: Juliet's face peering out her bedroom window.

 JULIET

 O God she comes!

EXT. CAPULETS MANSION - DRIVEWAY. DAY.

PULL BACK: JULIET'S P.O.V.: The limousine pulls up at the

front door, the Nurse alights.

Juliet bolts from the room.

INT. LANDING. DAY.

Juliet hurries down the stairs - the Nurse, a way ahead,

disappears into a doorway.

INT. STAIRWAY. DAY.

Juliet races down a dark stairwell that leads to the bowels

of the house.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

The kitchen, obviously the Nurse's domain, is decorated with

a mixture of religious iconography and travel posters. Most

of the posters depict a strange city of decadent, decaying,

beauty.

Juliet bursts breathlessly into the room.

 JULIET

 O honey nurse, what news?

The Nurse, buried up to her ample hips inside the

refrigerator, does not turn around.

Juliet cries impatiently.

 JULIET

 Nurse!

The nurse emerges from the ice box laden with food. Moving

to the counter she starts to make a sandwich.

 NURSE

 I am aweary, give me leave awhile.

 Fie, how my bones ache. What a

 jaunce have I.

Juliet under her breath.

 JULIET

 I would thou hadst my bones and I

 thy news.

Juliet goes to the nurse.

 JULIET

 Nay come, I pray thee, speak: good;

 good

 Nurse, speak.

Sandwich made, the nurse shuffles over to a corner couch.

 NURSE

 Jesu, what haste. Can you not stay

 awhile?

 Can you not see I am out of breath?

Juliet cannot stand the suspense any longer.

 JULIET

 How art thou out of breath when

 thou hast breath

 To say to me that thou art out of

 breath!

 Is the news good or bad? Answer to

 that.

The Nurse takes a big bite from her sandwich and answers

through thoughtful chews.

 NURSE

 Well, you have made a simple

 choice.

 You know not how to choose a man.

 Romeo? No, not he.

 Though his face be better than any

 man's, yet his leg excels all men's

 and for a hand and a foot and a

 body, though they be not to be

 talked on, yet they are past

 compare.

 He's not the flower of courtesy,

 but I'll warrant him as gentle as a

 lamb. Go thy ways, wench, serve

 God. What, have you dined at home?

Juliet is flabbergasted.

 JULIET

 No, no. But all this I did know

 before. What says he of our

 marriage? What of that

 NURSE

 Lord how my head aches! What a

 head have I:

 My back -

This is a game that Juliet knows well. She moves behind the

Nurse and begins massaging her back.

 NURSE (CONT.)

 o' t'other side - ah, my back!

 Beshrew your heart for sending me

 about

 To catch my death with jauncing up

 and down.

With sublime self control, Juliet coo's sweetly.

 JULIET

 I'faith I am sorry that thou art

 not well.

 Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me,

 what says my love?

 NURSE

 Your love says like an honest

 gentleman,

 And a courteous, and a kind, and a

 handsome,

 And I warrant a virtuous - Where is

 your mother?

Juliet cracks.

 JULIET

 Where is my mother? How oddly thou

 repliest!

 'Your love says, like an honest

 gentleman, "Where is your mother"'!

The nurse sulks.

 NURSE

 O God's lady dear are you so hot?

 Henceforth do your messages yourself.

Juliet's frustration explodes.

 JULIET

 Here's such a coil! COME WHAT SAYS

 ROMEO?

PAUSE: The Nurse considers Juliet.

 NURSE

 Have you got leave to go to

 confession today?

 JULIET

 I have.

 NURSE

 Then hie you hence to Father

 Laurence cell.

 There stays a husband to make you a

 wife!

Juliet, with a scream of joy, hugs the Nurse to her.

HOLD ON: Juliet's ecstatic features.

INT. CHURCH. DAY.

TIGHT ON: FATHER LAURENCE:

 FATHER LAURENCE

 These violent delights have violent

 ends!

PULL BACK: Father Laurence is preaching energetically from

the pulpit. Hidden from the congregation, Romeo waits in a

small alcove chapel at the side of the altar.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 The sweetest honey

 Is loathsome in its own

 deliciousness,

 Therefore love moderately.

The Father glances toward Romeo.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Long love doth so.

 Too swift arrives as tardy as too

 slow.

Juliet pushes through the double doors at the far end of the

church.

Father Laurence motions to the middle-aged choir master who

leads the choir into a choral version of Led Zeppelin's "A

Whole Lot of Love" with Latin lyrics.

Father Laurence hurries from the altar over to Romeo.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Here comes the lady.

Juliet bursts into the tiny chapel. Trying to observe a

vestige of decorum, she greets Father Laurence.

 JULIET

 Good afternoon to my ghostly

 confessor.

But before the priest can reply, the two lovers embrace,

kissing passionately.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 (dryly)

 Romeo shall thank thee, daughter,

 for us both.

The choir completes the hymn and the priest, realising it is

his cue, rushes back to the altar. He quickly delivers a

prayer to the congregation while eyeing the increasingly

amorous smooching of the young couple.

The choir launch into a joyous chorus and the priest returns

to Romeo and Juliet. He delicately parts the couple.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Come, come, and we will make short

 work.

 For, by your leaves, you shall not

 stay alone

 Till Holy Church incorporate two in

 one.

A young boy with a voice like Jamiroquai steps forward. He

launches into a wailing solo.

MACRO CLOSE UP: A simple silver ring. Engraved on the

inside of the band are the words 'I love thee.'

PULL BACK: Romeo slips the ring onto Juliet's finger as the

priest executes the formal sacrament of marriage.

INT./EXT. CHURCH. DAY.

CRANE UP: Through the majestic patterning of stained glass,

and out of the church to find Peter, the chauffeur, cradling

a small camera as he waits nervously beside the limo.

EXT. CHURCH. DAY.

The music swells in celebration. Romeo and Juliet, now

newly-wed, rush from the side door of the church. The

priest follows, throwing handfuls of rice. Peter studiously

takes a snap as the bride and groom kiss.

Peter holds the door of the limousine open. Reluctantly

Juliet gets into the car.

As the car pulls out of the driveway, Romeo runs alongside.

HOLD: On Romeo as he watches the big black car speed away.

EXT. UNDERWATER. DAY.

FISH-EYE VIEW: From the bottom of the ocean; Mercutio's

distorted features. Gun aimed, he stares intently into the

water.

A muffled BANG! and a bullet whizzes past the camera.

EXT. VERONA BEACH. DAY.

We see that Mercutio - wading in knee deep water close to

the beach - is hunting fish.

Benvolio shelters in the shade of an unmanned life guard

tower.

A shimmering heat haze blankets the deserted beach and the

horizon is stacked with purple storm clouds.

 BENVOLIO

 I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's

 retire.

 The day is hot,

Mercutio, ignoring him, plugs away at another fish. Benvolio

nervously looks to see if there is any reaction to the sound

of the shot.

 BENVOLIO (CONT.)

 The Capels are abroad. And if we

 meet we shall not 'scape a brawl.

Mercutio strides out of the water.

 MERCUTIO

 Thou art like one of these fellows

 that, when he enters the confines

 of a tavern, claps me his sword

 upon the table and says 'God send

 me no need of thee!'

 (he hands Benvolio

 his gun)

 and by the operation of the second

 cup draws him on the drawer, when

 indeed there is no need.

Another incredible sleight of hand routine and Mercutio has

managed to draw Benvolio's pistol, retrieve his own gun, and

trap Benvolio with a barrel at each temple.

The joke has worn thin for Benvolio; he pushes past Mercutio

toward where Balthasar, Sampson and Gregory lounge in the

shade of the beach-side hang.

Suddenly he stops dead - a monstrous black sedan prowls into

the beach side parking lot.

 BENVOLIO

 By my head, here comes the Capulets.

 MERCUTIO

 By my heel, I care not.

EXT. BEACH - PARKING LOT. DAY.

The sedan mounts the curb and slides to a halt only metres

from Benvolio and Mercutio.

Tybalt, Abra and Petruchio alight from the sedan and walk

menacingly toward Mercutio and Benvolio.

 TYBALT

 Gentlemen, good day. A word with

 one of you.

The boys from the hang, drawn the Capulet car, converge -

eyes dart nervously, hands stray towards guns.

Mercutio smiles mockingly.

 MERCUTIO

 And but one word with one of us?

 Couple it with something. Make it

 a word and a...

Leaning close to Tybalt, he camps the implication.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 ...blow.

Mercutio scores. The boys laugh.

 TYBALT

 (furious)

 You shall find me apt enough to

 that, sir,

 (clutching at his

 side arm)

 And you will give me occasion.

CLOSE ON: Mercutio. He stops, eyeing the hand on the gun.

No one moves.

 MERCUTIO

 (a breathy, coquettish

 voice)

 Could you not take some occasion

 without giving?

The boys fall about again. Tybalt cracks.

 TYBALT

 Mercutio, thou consortest with Romeo.

The accusation stings - Mercutio's anger flares.

 MERCUTIO

 Consort? What, dost thou make us

 minstrels? And thou make minstrels

 of us look to hear nothing but

 discords. Here's my fiddlestick.

Indicating his holstered gun.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Here's that shall make you dance.

 (barking at Tybalt)

 Zounds,

 (goading him to go

 for his gun)

 consort!

CLOSE ON: Tybalt.

CLOSE ON: Mercutio. He will not back down. Benvolio tries

to diffuse things.

 BENVOLIO

 Either withdraw unto some private

 place.

 Or reason coldly of your grievances.

 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.

At that moment, Romeo's car pulls into the lot. Tybalt

smiles.

 TYBALT

 Well sir, here comes my man.

Tybalt moves toward Romeo who bounds from his car full of

happy news.

 TYBALT

 Romeo, the love I bear thee can

 afford

 No better term than this:

CLOSE ON: Tybalt. He clears his jacket from his side arm

and issues the challenge.

 TYBALT (CONT.)

 Thou art a villain!

CLOSE ON: Mercutio.

CLOSE ON: Benvolio.

All eyes are on Romeo.

Romeo calmly approaches his now cousin.

 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

 knowest me not.

Romeo turns, and to the amazement of all, walks back to his

car. Tybalt, unable to shoot him in the back, is confused.

He hurls himself into his sedan.

Kicking it into a sand spraying U-turn, he careens the short

distance to Romeo's car. Slamming into the back of it he

blocks Romeo in.

Tybalt leaps out, maniacally kicking at bumper, door and

headlights. Romeo flicks the locks down. Tybalt shatters

the side window and hauls Romeo through the door, slamming

him against the savaged fuselage.

 TYBALT

 Boy, this shall not excuse the

 injuries

 That thou hast done me!

He smashes Romeo across the face, Romeo crashes to the

roadway.

 TYBALT

 (yelling)

 Turn and draw.

A cut has opened in the side of Romeo's mouth. He unsteadily

lifts himself up, and meeting Tybalt's gaze, speaks through

bloodied teeth.

 ROMEO

 I never injured thee,

 And so, good Capulet, which name I

 tender

 As dearly as mine own...

Romeo cautiously extracts his gun...

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 ...be satisfied.

...and throws it at Tybalt's feet.

Storm clouds obscure the sun as Romeo turns and walks from

the parking lot.

Mercutio, Benvolio and the others cannot believe their eyes.

 MERCUTIO

 O calm, dishonourable, vile

 submission!

EXT. BEACH - VACANT LOT. DAY.

Tybalt's anger must be answered. He ceremoniously disarms,

gives his weapon to Abra, and sprints after Romeo who is now

passing a beach side lot that houses an abandoned grand

hotel. A bone-cracking kick sends Romeo crumbling into the

vacant lot. The boys swarm toward the fray.

Romeo, still refusing the fight, scrambles up the stairs of

the deserted hotel. Tybalt trips him and Romeo careens into

an ornamental wooden railing, smashing it to pieces.

Tybalt kicks savagely at the helpless Romeo.

Suddenly, Mercutio appears running full tilt down the

concrete terrace. He plucks up one of the splintered wooden

palings and yells...

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Tybalt, you ratcatcher,

...as he bludgeons him across the face. Tybalt goes down.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Will you walk?

Tybalt leaps to his feet grabbing a lump of wood.

 TYBALT

 What wouldst thou have with me?

He swipes at Mercutio.

 MERCUTIO

 (avoiding)

 Good King of Cats, nothing but one

 of your nine lives.

Mercutio jabs, Tybalt sidesteps.

 TYBALT

 I am for you.

Tybalt aims a double-handed blow to Mercutio's head.

Mercutio blocks, hooking Tybalt's stick away.

Unarmed, Tybalt throws his full body weight upon Mercutio,

slamming him against a window that shatters in a storm of

glass.

Lightning fast, Mercutio jackknifes to his feet. He raises

his weapon to deliver a skull-crushing final blow to the

trapped Tybalt. Romeo rushes between them.

 ROMEO

 Forbear this outrage, good Mercutio!

Seizing the opportunity, Tybalt lunges at Romeo with a

lethal triangle of broken glass. He misses, gouging instead

a slash of flesh from Mercutio's stomach.

A scream of excruciating pain as Mercutio grabs at his

bloodied side. Everyone is still. In the abrupt silence,

sirens are heard closing in the distance. Abra tugs at

Tybalt.

 ABRA

 Away Tybalt!

They bolt for their vehicle.

Benvolio goes to Mercutio.

 BENVOLIO

 Art thou hurt?

But Mercutio, covering his wound with his hand, laughs.

 MERCUTIO

 Ay, ay, a scratch.

He turns to his assembled fans at the bottom of the stairs.

With outrageous bravado he plays at being Caesar the

conqueror.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 A scratch!

The boys cheer their conquering hero. Romeo helps Mercutio

down the stairs.

 ROMEO

 Courage, man. The hurt cannot be

 much.

Mercutio holding his bleeding side, jokes through the pain.

 MERCUTIO

 'Twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow

 and you shall find me a grave man.

He turns the next thought to the assembled audience.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 (through crazy laughter)

 A plague o' both your houses!

Mercutio turns from the cheering boys to Romeo who is

struggling to support his weight.

Mercutio - through weak and desperate breathing.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 Why the devil came you between us?

 I was hurt under your arm.

Romeo starts to register the panic in Mercutio's eyes.

 ROMEO

 I thought all for the best.

Like an animal trying to break free from a mortal trap,

Mercutio pushes Romeo away. He screams in horror, as if

falling in the dark:

 MERCUTIO

 A plague o' both your houses!

 They have made worms' meat of me.

Mercutio staggers down the stairs and collapses in the dirt.

Romeo is there instantly, cradling his friend's head out of

the dust. The dying boy stares back at Romeo, smiling

through the chilling cold.

 MERCUTIO (CONT.)

 (a silent whisper)

 Your houses!

Everything stands still, everything is quiet. The storm

finally breaks.

EXT. BEACH - RAIN. DAY.

Tiny drops of water fall from the sky and bespeckle

Mercutio's lifeless body. The droplets grow to a heavy rain.

Romeo can hear the faint sound a thousand miles away of

Benvolio whispering:

 BENVOLIO

 Mercutio is dead!

Tears streak Romeo's face. He cries out.

 ROMEO

 Oh sweet Juliet,

 Thy beauty hath made me effeminate

 And in my temper softened valor's

 steel!

The sound of Tybalt's vehicle starting brings back cold

reality. Romeo's sorrow turns to uncontrollable rage.

Shrugging aside Benvolio's attempts to restrain him, Romeo

runs to his car.

EXT. BEACH - PARKING LOT. DAY.

Up ahead Tybalt's sedan screeches into a fishtailing U-turn

and powers away.

Romeo jumps into his vehicle. In an effort to head Tybalt

off, he guns his damaged machine down a one way street.

The rain is now blinding. Romeo stops for nothing;

pedestrians flee, cars spin out of control.

EXT. VERONA BEACH STREETS - FROM AIR. DAY.

AERIAL SHOT: The two cars speed along parallel roads toward

Plaza Jesu. Romeo is gaining.

EXT. VERONA STREET - CHRIST ROUNDABOUT. DAY.

CUT TO: Tybalt's car negotiating the immense roundabout at

the foot of the statue of Jesus.

EXT. CHRIST ROUNDABOUT. DAY.

CUT TO: Romeo's car firing out of the one way street and

slamming into Tybalt's car. Tybalt's car careens out of

control up the stairs of the statue, clips the fountain,

flips, and slides upside down onto the roadway.

CUT TO: Tybalt scrambling from his upturned vehicle.

CUT TO: Romeo running toward him.

SUDDENLY Romeo is halted by Tybalt's drawn gun. Fearlessly

marching toward it, he screams through tears.

 ROMEO

 Mercutio's soul

 Is but a little way above our heads,

Romeo grabs the barrel of the gun; forcing it between his

own eyes, he growls insanely at Tybalt.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Staying for thine to keep him

 company.

Tybalt, unnerved, tries to back off.

 TYBALT

 Thou, wretched boy, shalt with him

 hence.

Romeo, refusing to let go of the gun, forces Tybalt backward

through the torrential rain.

 ROMEO

 (with frightening intensity)

 Either thou or I, or both, must go

 with him.

Cars swerve, Romeo is relentless. He grips Tybalt's hand

trying to force him to shoot.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Either thou or I, or both, must go

 with him.

Panicked, Tybalt wrenches free and lurches onto the roadway.

Blinded by the headlights of an oncoming car he thuds onto

its hood as it skids to a halt. The impact catapults his

gun high into the air.

Romeo coldly follows its slow motion, spinning trajectory.

Real time stretches as the gun dances high above his head.

Police sirens, cars swerving, people screaming, and the

yelling of panicked commands fade to a nothingness.

Romeo stands calmly considering the gun in the air. A

harrowing symphonic tone and the echo of Mercutio's voice

can be heard.

 MERCUTIO (V/O)

 Why the devil came you between us?

CUT TO: Patrol cars sliding to a halt.

CUT TO: The spinning gun slowly falling to earth.

CUT TO: Tybalt rising from the ground.

CUT TO: Cops leaping from their cars.

CUT TO: The gun landing in Romeo's hand. His eyes full of

rage.

CUT TO: Cops levelling their revolvers.

 COP

 (Romeo in his sights)

 Put up thy weapon.

CUT TO: Real time - Romeo fires three deliberate shots.

Tybalt's body convulses backwards against the car, hitting

it with a thud, bloodying the shattered windscreen.

The cop fires. A bullet grazes Romeo's arm - his gun drops

as he screams.

 ROMEO

 O, I am fortune's fool!

At that moment a roaring hurricane wind hits; blinding police.

CLOSE ON: The scaffolding surrounding the Jesus statue.

Part of it's canvas covering rips away. Scaffold rains down

as the insanely flapping material tries to smash free from

it's moorings.

Through the mayhem, a rusty Ford driven by Balthasar, slides

to a halt.

Balthasar screams out at Romeo.

 BALTHASAR

 Romeo, away be gone! Stand not

 amazed!

Romeo collapses into the front seat.

The cops open fire as Balthasar speeds off into the storm.

INT. BALTHASAR'S CAR. AFTERNOON.

Romeo is bleeding from the bullet graze.

EXT. CAUSEWAY. AFTERNOON.

The gale-force winds throw waves across the causeway as the

fugitives disappear into the black afternoon.

CRANE UP: In the distance we see Montague and Capulet towers.

Divided by the statue of Christ, they suffer the storm's rage.

EXT. MONUMENT. AFTERNOON.

Away, below the outstretched arms of Christ, lights from

emergency vehicles pulse red through the downpour.

THE CAMERA: Falls through heavy rain toward a woman crouched

over the lifeless body of Tybalt.

She cries:

 GLORIA

 Tybalt!

Cops nervously eye Fulgencio Capulet and Ted Montague, who,

both flanked by body guards, face each other across the

crime scene. Medics stand by helplessly as Gloria clings to

Tybalt's body. A handcuffed Benvolio looks on.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Tybalt, my cousin, O my brother's

 child!

 O, the blood is spilled of my dear

 kinsman.

Police lines part as Captain Prince arrives.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Where are the vile beginners of

 this fray?

Benvolio struggles forward.

 BENVOLIO

 O noble Prince I can discover all

 The unlucky manage of this fatal

 brawl.

Gloria appeals hysterically:

 GLORIA

 Prince as thou art true,

 For blood of ours shed blood of

 Montague!

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

 BENVOLIO

 (pointing to Tybalt's corpse)

 There lies the man, slain by young

 Romeo,

 That slew thy kinsman brave Mercutio.

Gloria interjects savagely.

 GLORIA

 He speaks not true! Affection

 makes him false!

 BENVOLIO

 Romeo, that spoke him fair, could

 not take

 Truce with the unruly spleen of

 Tybalt

 Deaf to peace!

 GLORIA

 He is a kinsman to the Montague!

 I beg for justice which thou Prince

 must give.

 Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not

 live!

Captain Prince turns to Gloria.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio.

 Who now the price of his dear blood

 doth owe?

Ted Montague pleads:

 MONTAGUE

 Not Romeo, Prince, he was Mercutio's

 friend; His fault concludes but

 what the law should end,

 The life of Tybalt.

Captain Prince eyes Montague coldly.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 And for that offence

 Immediately we do exile him.

Montague, body guards in tow, surges forward.

 MONTAGUE

 Noble Prince...?

Prince silences him.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 I will be deaf to pleading and

 excuses;

 Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase

 out abuses.

 Therefore use none.

The Captain turns and addresses his assembled officers.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE (CONT.)

 Let Romeo hence in haste,

 Else, when he is found that hour is

 his last.

CLOSE ON: Captain Prince.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE (CONT.)

 Bear hence this body and attend our

 will.

 Mercy but murders, pardoning those

 that kill.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. AFTERNOON.

An acoustic guitar version of Joy Division's 'Love Will Tear

Us Apart.' Juliet traces the path of a raindrop on the

window pane as she speaks her thoughts to the storm.

 JULIET

 Come gentle night, coming loving

 black browed night,

 Give me my Romeo. And when I shall

 die,

 Take him and cut him out in little

 stars,

 And he will make the face of heaven

 so fine

 That all the world will be in love

 with night,

 And pay no worship to the garish

 sun.

 O, I have bought the mansion of a

 love

 But not possessed it, and though I

 am sold,

 Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is

 this day

 As is the night before some festival

 To an impatient child that hath new

 robes

 And may not wear them.

EXT. CAPULET'S MANSION - DRIVEWAY. AFTERNOON.

Juliet's P.O.V.: The limousine pulls into the driveway.

PULL OUT: Of the window and CRANE DOWN: Juliet runs from the

room.

EXT. CAPULET MANSION. AFTERNOON.

Through the open doorway we see an excited Juliet meet the

Nurse at the bottom of the stairs.

The music surges.

TRACK IN: The Nurse's words are lost in the storm.

Juliet buckles.

INT. CAPULET MANSION. AFTERNOON.

We are close enough now to hear Juliet's words.

 JULIET

 Oh God! Did Romeo's hand shed

 Tybalt's blood?

 NURSE

 It did, it did! Alas the day, it

 did!

 JULIET

 Oh serpent heart, hid with a

 flowering face.

 Was ever book containing such vile

 matter

 So fairly bound? O, that deceit

 should dwell

 In such a gorgeous palace!

 NURSE

 There's no trust, No faith, no

 honesty in men. All perjured,

 All forsworn, all naught, all

 dissemblers.

 Shame come to Romeo.

 JULIET

 Blistered be thy tongue

 For such a wish! He was not born

 to shame. Upon his brow shame is

 ashamed to sit.

 NURSE

 Will you speak well of him that

 killed your cousin?

 JULIET

 Shall I speak ill of him that is my

 husband?

 Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall

 smooth thy name

 When I, thy three-hours wife have

 mangled it?

 But whyfore, villain, didst thou

 kill my cousin?

 That villain cousin would have

 killed my husband.

 All this is comfort, wherefore weep

 I then?

 Some word there was worser than

 Tybalt's death:

 I would forget it fain - exiled.

 Tybalt is dead, and Romeo exiled.

 To speak that word is father,

 mother,

 Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet, all slain,

 All dead.

Juliet sinks to the floor, overwhelmed by tears.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 Nurse, I'll to my wedding bed,

 And death, not Romeo, take my

 maidenhead.

Nurse looks down at Juliet. She goes and comforts her.

 NURSE

 Hie to your chamber. I'll find

 Romeo

 To comfort you. I know well where

 he is.

 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at

 night.

Juliet looks up through tears.

 JULIET

 O find him, give this ring to my

 true knight,

 And bid him come to take his last

 farewell.

SLAM MACRO ZOOM: Into the ring. The screen fills with the

words 'I love thee'.

INT. PRESBYTERY BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Romeo lies on the bed shirtless and crying. His wound has

been bandaged and Balthasar crouches frightened in the corner.

The priest leads the Nurse into the room.

Romeo looks up.

 ROMEO

 Nurse!

She goes to him.

 NURSE

 Ah sir! Ah sir! Death's the end

 of all.

 ROMEO

 Speakest thou of Juliet?

 Where is she? And how doth she?

 And what says

 My concealed lady to our cancelled

 love?

 NURSE

 O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps

 and weeps,

 And then on Romeo cries, and then

 falls down again.

Romeo is wailing inconsolably.

 ROMEO

 As if that name,

 Shot from the deadly level of a

 gun,

 Did murder her, as that name's

 cursed hand murdered her kinsman!

Father Laurence shakes the hysterical boy.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 I thought thy disposition better

 tempered!

 Thy Juliet is alive, There art thou

 happy.

 The law that threatened death

 becomes thy friend

 And turns it to exile. There art

 thou happy.

 A pack of blessings light upon thy

 back.

Romeo calms. The Nurse gives him the ring.

 NURSE

 Here sir, a ring my lady bid me

 give you.

Romeo enfolds the ring in his hand.

 ROMEO

 How well my comfort is revived by

 this.

The priest goes to his wardrobe, removes a clean white shirt

and helps Romeo put it on.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Go, get thee to thy love, as was

 decreed.

 Ascend her chamber. Hence and

 comfort her.

 But look thou stay not till the

 Watch be set,

 For then thou canst not pass to

 Mantua where thou shalt live till

 we can find a time

 To blaze your marriage, reconcile

 your friends,

 Beg pardon of the Prince and call

 thee back,

 With twenty hundred thousand times

 more joy

 Than thou wentst forth in

 lamentation.

Father Laurence ushers Romeo from the room.

INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT.

They hurry down the hallway.

The priest opens the front door.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Go hence. Be gone by the break of

 day

 Sojourn in Mantua. Give me thy hand.

Romeo embraces him.

 ROMEO

 Farewell.

The priest and Balthasar watch as Romeo and the Nurse sprint

for the car.

INT. CAPULET MANSION. NIGHT.

Sobs echo through the house.

Dave Paris stands in the entrance hallway clutching a huge

bunch of flowers.

Fulgencio Capulet stands beside him, whisky glass in hand.

CUT TO: Gloria on the upper landing. There is a strange

faraway quality about her as she descends to Dave and Capulet.

 GLORIA

 She'll not come down tonight.

Dave, an understanding smile.

 DAVE

 These times of woe afford no times

 to woo.

Capulet guides Dave into the house.

 CAPULET

 Look you, she loved her kinsman

 Tybalt dearly.

 GLORIA

 (joining)

 And so did I.

 CAPULET

 (a cold glance at Gloria)

 Well, we were born to die.

Capulet takes a large slug of whisky. Gloria leans close to

Dave.

 GLORIA

 I'll know her mind early tomorrow.

 Tonight she's mewed up to her

 heaviness.

As Gloria, Dave and Capulet exit down the hallway we CRANE

UP: toward Juliet's bedroom door.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Juliet's face. Tears stream onto the pillow.

Without warning a hand lightly touches her cheek. Juliet's

eyes dart up to discover Romeo standing above her.

A still moment of disbelief. Leaning down, Roemo kisses

away the tears that fall from her dark, wide eyes.

Juliet's lips find Romeo's and they gently sink back onto

the bed.

INT. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

Capulet sits in an armchair drinking. Dave and Gloria sit

opposite as Capulet whips himself into a frenzy of drunken

excitement.

 CAPULET

 We'll keep no great ado - a friend

 or two.

 For, hark you, Tybalt being slain

 so late,

 It may be thought we held him

 carelessly,

 Being our kinsman if we revel

 much -

 But soft what day is this?

 DAVE

 Monday my lord.

 CAPULET

 Well Wednesday is too soon - what

 say you to Thursday?

Gloria looks up alarmed; Dave is stunned.

 DAVE

 My lord I...

 CAPULET

 (leaning close)

 I will make a desperate tender of

 my child's love.

 (a drunken good humour)

 I think she will be ruled in all

 respects by me;

 (exploding with

 hearty laughter)

 Nay, more, I doubt it not!

CUT TO: Gloria, her face hardens.

 CAPULET

 (to Dave)

 But what say you to Thursday?

Dave is trying to catch up.

 DAVE

 My lord I...

CUT TO: Capulet he eyes Dave intently.

 DAVE (CONT.)

 I would that Thursday were tomorrow.

Delighted, Capulet jumps to his feet.

 CAPULET

 A Thursday let it be then!

Capulet holds out his glass in toast. Dave and Gloria rise.

 CAPULET

 Wife, go you to Juliet ere you go

 to bed.

 Tell her, a Thursday she shall be

 married

 To this noble sir!

CLOSE ON: The glasses clink.

EXT. CAPULET ESTATE. DAWN.

A pink and gold dawn breaks over Capulet Mansion.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. DAWN.

A tangle of young limbs.

Romeo and Juliet blissfully asleep. The dawn light creeps

into the room.

EXT. CAPULET ESTATE. DAWN.

Balthasar's car covertly pulls into a side road near the

estate.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. DAWN.

Romeo and Juliet still asleep.

CRANE DOWN: Toward the sleeping innocence of the faces.

HOLD: A shadow of fear passes across Romeo's features.

With a cry of panic, he sits bolt upright.

Wide awake, but disorientated, Romeo stares around the

room - as Juliet stirs, he remembers where he is.

Slipping quietly from the bed, Romeo begins to dress.

CLOSE ON: Romeo. A pair of lips enter frame and find his

neck. It is Juliet. She hugs herself to him.

 JULIET

 Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet

 near day.

Romeo turns - softly he strokes her cheek.

 ROMEO

 I must be gone and live, or stay

 and die.

Juliet kisses his finger-tips.

 JULIET

 Yond light is not daylight,

And then his cheek...

 JULIET (CONT.)

 I know it, I

 It is some meteor that the sun

 exhales

 To light thee on thy way to Mantua.

 Therefore stay yet. Thou needest

 not to be gone.

Romeo, feverishly returning the kisses, throws himself on

Juliet.

 ROMEO

 Let me be taken, let me be put to

 death.

 I have more care to stay than will

 to go.

 Come, death, and welcome! Juliet

 wills it so.

Juliet is suddenly still. Romeo kisses her gently.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 How is't, my soul? Let's talk. It

 is not day.

Juliet pulls Romeo to his feet.

 JULIET

 It is, it is! Hie hence, be gone,

 away!

 O, now be gone! More light and

 light it grows.

Frantically she helps him into his clothes.

 ROMEO

 More light and light: more dark and

 dark our woes.

There is an urgent knocking on the door. They freeze.

 NURSE (O/S)

 Madam!

 JULIET

 Nurse!

 NURSE (O/S)

 Your lady mother is coming to your

 chamber.

 JULIET

 Then, window, let day in, and let

 life out.

Desperately Juliet pulls Romeo out onto the balcony.

EXT. BALCONY. DAWN.

The storm, now past, has left a morning achingly pure.

 ROMEO

 Farewell, farewell. One kiss, and

 I'll descend.

Romeo climbs down from the balcony and into the shadows.

 JULIET

 O, think'st thou we shall ever meet

 again?

Romeo smiles up at her.

 ROMEO

 I doubt it not;

Juliet's face darkens.

 JULIET

 O God, I have an ill-divining soul.

 Methinks I see thee, now thou art

 so low,

 As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.

Romeo scrambles back up to the balcony.

 ROMEO

 Trust me, love, all these woes

 shall serve

 For sweet discourses in our times

 to come.

From Juliet's bedroom comes the brittle sound of Gloria

Capulet's voice.

 GLORIA

 Ho daughter! Are you up?

Juliet spins around. Gloria has parted the curtains and is

staring directly at her daughter.

 GLORIA

 Well, well.

CUT TO: Romeo sheltered just below the lip of the balcony.

FOLLOW: His hand, as it slowly reaches up and touches

Juliet's fingers hidden behind her back.

Gloria returns to the room. Juliet steals a glance toward

Romeo as he silently mouths:

 ROMEO

 Adieu, adieu!

As Romeo's face disappears into the shadows Juliet whispers

a little prayer to herself.

 JULIET

 O Fortune, Fortune! Be fickle,

 Fortune,

 Fo then I hope thou wilt not keep

 him long

 But send him back.

INT. JULIET'S BEDROOM. DAWN.

Juliet is trying not to cry as she goes in to her mother.

Gloria turns to her.

 GLORIA

 Thou hast a careful father, child:

 One who, to put thee from thy

 heaviness,

 Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy

 That thou expects not nor I looked

 not for.

Juliet plays along.

 JULIET

 Madam, in happy time. What day is

 that?

Gloria takes a deep breath.

 GLORIA

 Marry, my child, early next Thursday

 morn

 The gallant, young, and noble

 gentleman,

 Sir Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,

 Shall happily make thee there a

 joyful bride.

CLOSE ON: Juliet. She can barely speak.

 JULIET

 Now by Saint Peter's Church, and

 Peter too,

 He shall not make me there a joyful

 bride!

Fear passes across Gloria's face.

 GLORIA

 Here comes your father. Tell him

 so yourself.

Capulet - whisky glass in hand - ebulliently bursts into the

room.

 CAPULET

 How now, wife?

 Have you delivered to her our decree?

 GLORIA

 Ay, sir. But she will none, she

 gives you thanks.

 I would the fool were married to

 her grave!

Capulet - a dangerous calm.

 CAPULET

 How? Will she none?

 Is she not proud? Doth she not

 count her blest,

 Unworthy as she is, that we have

 wrought

 So worthy a gentleman to be her

 bride?

 JULIET

 Not proud you have, but thankful

 that you have.

 Proud can I never be of what I hate.

PAUSE: Capulet considers his daughter, then -

BAM! He hurls his glass against the wall, shattering it

into a thousand pieces.

 CAPULET

 Thank me no thankings, nor proud me

 no prouds,

 But fettle your fine joints 'gainst

 Thursday next ...

Capulet advances. Juliet, terrified, retreats into the

hallway.

 JULIET

 Hear me with patience but to speak

 a word...

INT. LANDING. DAY.

The Nurse appears as Capulet picks his daughter up and

shakes her like a rag doll.

 CAPULET

 Speak not, reply not, do not answer

 me!

He throws her to the floor. His fist thuds as it slams into

her face.

 GLORIA

 (screaming)

 Fie, fie! What are you mad?

Gloria tries to restrain Capulet. He back-hands her,

sending her flying against the wall - bellowing insanely, he

advances on his cowering daughter.

 CAPULET

 Hang thee, young baggage!

 Disobedient wretch.

The Nurse throws herself between Capulet and Juliet.

 NURSE

 God in heaven bless her!

 You are to blame, my lord, to rate

 her so.

Furious, Capulet shunts her aside.

 CAPULET

 Peace, you mumbling fool!

Capulet yanks his daughter's face close to his.

 CAPULET (CONT.)

 I tell thee what - get thee to

 church a Thursday

 Or never after look me in the face.

 And you be mine, I'll give you to

 my friend.

 And you be not, hang, beg, starve,

 die in the streets,

 Trust to it. Bethink you. I'll

 not be forsworn.

Capulet storms off down the hall.

CLOSE ON: Juliet. She huddles, shaking at the top of the

stairs.

 JULIET

 O sweet my mother, cast me not

 away!

 Delay this marriage for a month, a

 week.

 Or if you do not, make the bridal

 bed

 In that dim monument where Tybalt

 lies.

A trickle of blood issues from Gloria's cut lip. She checks

her appearance in the hall mirror.

 GLORIA

 Talk not to me, for I'll not speak

 a word.

 Do as thou wilt, for I have done

 with thee.

Gloria leaves.

 JULIET

 O God! - O Nurse, how shall this be

 prevented?

The Nurse doesn't reply.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 What sayest thou? Hast thou not a

 word of joy?

 Some comfort, Nurse.

A heavy silence.

The Nurse goes to Juliet.

 NURSE

 Faith, here it is.

 I think it best you married with

 this Paris.

 O, he's a lovely gentleman!

 I think you are happy in this

 second match,

 For it excels your first; or if it

 did not,

 Your first is dead - or 'twere as

 good he were

 As living here and you no use of him.

Juliet is very still.

 JULIET

 Speakest thou from thy heart?

 NURSE

 And from my soul too. Else beshrew

 them both.

 JULIET

 Amen.

 NURSE

 (unsure)

 What?

Juliet is matter of fact.

 JULIET

 Well, thou hast comforted me

 marvellous much.

 Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,

 Having displeased my father, to

 Friar Laurence,

 To make confession and to be

 absolved.

The old woman nods. She strokes Juliet's hair.

 NURSE

 This is wisely done.

Juliet does not look up.

A disturbing choral chant:

 DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH. DAY.

Sunlight pierces stained glass - the chant a sinister

underscoring. We hear Dave Paris' voice:

 DAVE (O/S)

 Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's

 death...

CRANE DOWN: Father Laurence and Dave Paris stand at the

front of the church.

 DAVE (CONT.)

 ...Now, sir, her father counts it

 dangerous

 That she doth give her sorrow so

 much sway,

 And in his wisdom hastes our

 marriage

 To stop the inundation of her

 tears...

Father Laurence turns. Juliet stands framed in the white

glare of the doorway.

Dave smiles.

 DAVE

 Happily met, my lady and my wife.

CLOSE ON: Juliet's hand concealed beneath her coat - we can

just see the handle of a gun.

Juliet advances slowly, an icy calm:

 JULIET

 That may be, sir, when I may be a

 wife.

 DAVE

 That 'may be', must be, love, on

 Thursday next.

Juliet stares past Dave.

 JULIET

 What must be, shall be.

Father Laurence, a forced cheerfulness.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 That's a certain text.

 DAVE

 Come you to make confession?

Juliet forces a smile.

 JULIET

 Are you at leisure, holy father,

 now?

 Or shall I come to you at evening

 mass?

 FATHER LAURENCE

 My leisure serves me, pensive

 daughter, now.

 (to Dave)

 We must entreat the time alone.

 DAVE

 God shield I should disturb

 devotion! - Juliet, on Thursday

 early will I rouse ye;

Dave bends.

CLOSE ON: Juliet; she stares stonily ahead as Dave kisses

her cheek.

 DAVE (CONT.)

 Till then, adieu, and keep this

 holy kiss.

Dave leaves.

TRACK WITH: Juliet; she runs for the sacristy.

The priest follows.

INT. SACRISTY. DAY.

Juliet, shaking with sobs takes refuge in the shadows of the

small room.

The priest goes to her.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 O Juliet, I already know thy grief.

Juliet pulls away.

 JULIET

 Tell me not, Father, that thou

 hearest of this,

 Unless thou tell me how I may

 prevent it.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 It strains me past the compass of

 my wits.

 JULIET

 (desperately)

 If in thy wisdom thou canst give no

 help

 Do thou but call my resolution

 wise,

 And with this I'll help it presently!

She pulls the gun, pointing it towards herself.

Horrified, Father Laurence moves to her.

Juliet, panicked, levels the gun at him.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Hold daughter!

 JULIET

 (through tears)

 Be not so long to speak. I lone to

 die!

Father Laurence holds out a soothing hand.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 I do spy a kind of hope,

 Which craves as desperate an

 execution

 As that is desperate which we would

 prevent.

 If, rather than marry Paris,

 Thou hast the strength of will to

 slay thyself,

 Then it is likely thou wilt

 undertake

 A thing like death...

We hear the distended chords of Fauré's Requiem.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 to chide away this shame...

It continues throughout as;

The entire screen fills with a glinting tear drop of blue

liquid.

Reflected in the fluid's convex surface, the face of Father

Laurence.

The face disappears as the tear drop falls and splashes into

a clear water solution.

Like a comet in slow motion, the drop stains the water a

cobalt hue.

INT. GREENHOUSE WORKROOM. DAY.

PULL BACK: The blue liquid fills a tiny glass vial held by

Father Laurence.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 No warmth, no breath shall testify

 thou livest.

 Each part, deprived of supple

 government,

 Shall stiff and stark and cold

 appear, like death.

 Now when the bridegroom in the

 morning

 Comes to rouse thee from thy bed,

 there art thou, dead.

 Thou shalt be borne to that same

 ancient vault

 Where all the kindred of the

 Capulets lie.

 In the meantime, against thou shalt

 awake,

 Shall Romeo by my letters know our

 drift,

 And hither shall he come.

 And that very

 Night shall Romeo bear thee hence

 to Mantua.

The priest cautiously hands Juliet the vial.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Take thou this vial, being then in

 bed,

 And this distilling liquor drink

 thou off.

 I'll send my letters to thy lord

 with speed to Mantua.

EXT. CHURCH. DAY.

As Father Laurence speaks, the screen fills with an express

envelope addressed "Romeo - Mantua." The envelope pulls away

from the camera and falls into a canvas bag brimming with

hundreds of like envelopes.

TRACK: With the canvas bag. It continues its journey into

the back of an express delivery van.

Heavy double doors slam shut, filling the screen with the

slogan 'Speed Express.'

The van pulls away.

 DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MANTUA. DAY.

A burning red sun is setting over an endless vista of ragged

wasteland.

CRANE DOWN: A weathered sign reads - Mantua: Behind it a

vast colony of permanent trailer homes stretches into the

distance.

The rap, rap, rap of knocking echoes through the park...

CUT TO: The source of the knocking. An express delivery

man, envelope in hand, raps vigorously on the door of an

unremarkable trailer.

INT. TRAILER. DAY.

TOPOGRAPHICAL SHOT: Romeo lies flat on a single bed in the

crampled trailer.

The rap, rap, rap is very loud now. We move toward Romeo

and realise he cannot hear the knocking because he has

Walkman headphones on.

EXT. TRAILER. DAY.

Unsuccessful, the delivery man is filling out a "WE CALLED"

card. He pushes it under the door.

 DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAPULET MANSION. NIGHT.

The heraldic 'Wedding Chimes' by JS Bach. Juliet stands

resplendent in a radiant bridal gown. The image floats

ethereally in a towering slab of mirror.

PULL OUT: From the mirror. The wedding dress is in fact

being held in front of Juliet by two members of the house

staff. Juliet is dressed in her night gown. The Nurse

suggests various pairs of shoes.

 JULIET

 (disinterested)

 Ay, these attires are best.

The fuss dispensed with, the staff leave.

 JULIET

 But, gentle Nurse,

 I pray thee leave me to myself

 tonight.

 NURSE

 Why Bride?

Juliet navigates the Nurse toward the door.

 JULIET

 (almost in tears)

 To move the heavens to smile upon

 my state,

 Which, well thou knowest, is cross

 and full of sin.

Juliet holds the Nurse in a pleading stare. She leaves.

Alone now, Juliet hurries to her bedside drawer. She

cautiously removes a rolled piece of cloth from which she

produces the glass vial.

 JULIET

 (whispers)

 What if this mixture do not work at

 all?

 Shall I be married then tomorrow

 morning?

She cautiously begins to unscrew the tiny black lid.

Suddenly, a knock at her door. Palming the vial, Juliet

swings around to meet the arrival of her mother. Gloria

probes her daughter's uneasiness.

 GLORIA

 What, are you busy, ho? Need you

 my help?

 JULIET

 (makes light of it)

 No, madam. We have culled such

 necessaries

 As are behoveful for our state

 tomorrow.

 So please you, let me now be left

 alone,

 And let the Nurse this night sit up

 with you.

Juliet begins to pull down the covers on her bed.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 For I am sure you have your hands

 full all

 In this so sudden business.

Gloria, sensing Juliet's distress, moves cautiously toward

her. Taking hold of the bed covers she helps her daughter

into bed.

 GLORIA

 Good night.

Juliet slides into bed. Gloria covers her with the blanket.

 GLORIA (CONT.)

 Get thee to bed, and rest, for thou

 hast need.

A brief moment between mother and daughter. Gloria, unable

to cross that final barrier, moves to the door; but she is

stopped by the urgency in Juliet's voice.

 JULIET

 Farewell!

Gloria turns to Juliet.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 God knows when we shall meet again.

CLOSE ON: Gloria. A faint perplexity, and then with an

almost warm smile she turns out the light and leaves.

The room is in darkness but for patterns of moonlight

through windows.

TRACK: Toward Juliet. The sombre tones of Fauré's Requiem

seep into our consciousness.

 JULIET

 I have a faint cold fear thrills

 through my veins

 That almost freezes up the heat of

 life.

She brings the vial her mouth.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 Come, vial. Romeo, I drink to thee.

Juliet drinks, a sudden violent convulsion, her face contorts

in fear.

 DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAPULET ESTATE. DAY.

The sky is filled with green and grey clouds. A gusty rain

blows the flower arrangements across the lawn. Large white

wedding marquees flap in the wind.

Through blurring rain, we see ambulances and police vehicles,

lights flashing. Father Laurence, accompanied by a dour

looking man in black, alights from his car. We follow their

P.O.V.: We hear snatches of radio calls.

 MEDIC ONE (OVER RADIO)

 Mortal drugs?

 MEDIC TWO (OVER RADIO)

 Of lethal quantity as 'twould

 render death.

INT. CAPULET MANSION - DINING ROOM. DAY.

They enter the house and pass the vast dining room, bedecked

with wedding decorations.

Capulet sits at the large mahogany table. In the background

Gloria stares vacantly.

Moving swiftly toward a doorway, the music builds.

INT. CAPULET MANSION - JULIET'S BEDROOM. DAY.

The door opens. On the bed Juliet's still body. Father

Laurence closes the door. The priest kneels and hastily

examines Juliet's pupils. He looks to the man in black who

retrieves the glass vial from the floor and pockets it.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 (to the man in black)

 As the custom is,

 In all her best array bear her to

 church.

When the man in black allows two other dark suited men into

the room, it becomes clear he is the undertaker.

 UNDERTAKER

 She shall be borne to that same

 ancient vault

 Where all the kindred of the

 Capulets lie.

INT. MAUSOLEUM. DAY.

A thousand voices proclaim the 'Song of Ascension.'

PAN DOWN: From the vaulting glass ceiling of the Capulet

mausoleum.

On view, enshrined in literally thousands of lit candles, is

Juliet's peaceful body.

We move through lines of Capulet mourners. In the shadows

of the front door a young man hides.

CLOSE ON: The young man. We recognise the distressed face

of Balthasar.

PUSH IN: Balthasar rushes from the Mausoleum.

EXT. MANTUA. DAY.

We are high above Mantua. Beyond the trailer park stretches

a long ribbon of black highway.

As a Speed Express van turns off the highway and into the

park, we hear Romeo's voice over:

 ROMEO (V/O)

 If I may trust the flattering truth

 of sleep

 My dreams presage some joyful news

 at hand...

CRANE DOWN: The Express van pulls up at the front office.

The driver alights and goes inside.

INT. TRAILER. DAY.

Romeo sits at the trailer's small kitchen table smoking and

writing in his notebook. The "WE CALLED" card lies next to

an overflowing ashtray.

His voice over continues.

 ROMEO (V/O)

 And all this day an unaccustomed

 spirit

 Lifts me above the ground with

 cheerful thoughts.

 I dreamt my lady came and found me

 dead

 And breathed such life with kisses

 in my lips

 That I revived and was an emperor.

 Ah me, how sweet is love itself

 possessed

 When but love's shadows are so rich

 in joy.

Stubbing out his cigarette, Romeo gazes through the trailer

window to see Balthasar's speeding car turn off the highway

and into the trailer park.

 ROMEO

 News from Verona!

An excited Romeo rushes from the trailer.

EXT. TRAILER PARK. DAY.

CRANE HIGH: Romeo sprints across open ground to intercept

Balthasar's car. We see, but Romeo cannot, the Express van

approaching from the office. The car slews to a halt and

Balthasar jumps out.

Romeo yells joyously.

 ROMEO

 How now, Balthasar?

Bathlasar cannot speak.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Dost thou not bring me letters from

 the Priest?

 How doth my lady? Is my father

 well?

 How doth my lady Juliet? That I

 ask again,

 For nothing can be ill if she be

 well.

Balthasar does not know how to say what he has come to tell.

He looks away.

 BALTHASAR

 Then she is well and nothing can be

 ill.

 Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,

 And her immortal part with angels

 lives.

 I saw her laid low in her kindred's

 vault.

For a long moment Romeo is profoundly still. When he

speaks, it is with a chilling calm.

 ROMEO

 Is it e'en so?

Balthasar nods.

Romeo turns and stares into the distant wasteland.

CLOSE ON: He speaks with bitter determination.

 ROMEO

 Then I defy you stars.

Romeo moves to the car.

 ROMEO

 I will hence tonight.

Balthasar tries to restrain him.

 BALTHASAR

 Have patience...

Exploding with fury, Romeo throws Balthasar against the

vehicle.

 ROMEO

 Leave me!

CUT TO: The Speed Express messenger. Returning to his

truck, the priest's undelivered envelope in his hand, the

messenger looks toward the two boys.

CUT TO: The boys. Balthasar pleads with Romeo.

 BALTHASAR

 Your looks are pale and wild and do

 import

 Some misadventure.

 ROMEO

 (with cold serenity)

 Tush, thou art deceived.

 (a niggling thought)

 Hast thou no letters to me from the

 Priest?

Balthasar shakes his head.

Romeo smiles.

 ROMEO

 No matter - I will hence tonight.

Romeo climbs into the passenger seat of the car. Balthasar

reluctantly gets behind the wheel.

As silent tears begin to flow, Romeo turns his face to the

setting sun.

PUSH IN: As he whispers:

 ROMEO

 Well Juliet, I will lie with thee

 tonight.

Balthasar's car roars out of the park.

CUT TO: The delivery man. He looks to the envelope in his

hand, then gets back into his truck.

EXT. HIGHWAY. NIGHT.

Balthasar's car speeds along the night-time highway.

CRANE UP: In the distance the glow of city lights.

EXT. ALLEYWAY. NIGHT.

Balthasar's car pulls into an alley and stops outside a

decrepity apartment block.

INT. APARTMENT BLOCK. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A bespectacled eye peers through the crack of a

partly open doorway. Below the face, the barrel of a

shotgun protrudes menacingly.

CUT TO: Romeo in the dark, paint peeling hallway.

 ROMEO

 Let me have

 A dram of poison, such soon-

 speeding gear

 As will disperse itself through all

 the veins

 That the life-weary taker may fall

 dead.

The eye considers, a voice rasps back.

 APOTHECARY

 Such mortal drugs I have, but

 Verona's law

 Is death to any he that utters them.

Romeo speaks with fury.

 ROMEO

 The world is not thy friend, nor

 the world's law.

 Then be not poor, but break it and

 take this.

Romeo shoves a wad of money at THE APOTHECARY'S face.

BEAT. The rattle of a latch chain and the door swings open.

Standing in the doorway is The Apothecary. Sixty something,

he has a face scarred with age and abuse.

 APOTHECARY

 My poverty, but not my will consents.

CLOSE ON: Romeo.

 ROMEO

 I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

INT. PRESBYTERY. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Father Laurence. He speaks into the telephone

with concern.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Who bore my letter then to Romeo?

INT. SPEED EXPRESS DEPOT. NIGHT.

A bored clerk is on the other end of the line. The priest's

letter is on the counter beside him.

 CLERK

 I could not sent it - here it is

 again.

INT. PRESBYTERY. NIGHT.

Father Laurence is worried.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 By my brotherhood, unhappy fortune!

 The letter was of dear import.

 (PAUSE: the priest listens)

 Adieu.

He hangs up the receiver and looks at the wall clock.

 FATHER LAURENCE (CONT.)

 Now must I to the monument alone.

 Within this hour will fair Juliet

 awake.

DISSOLVE FROM: The clock to...

INT. APOTHECARY'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A cat skitters across a stained formica table.

PULL BACK: The Apothecary's apartment is filled with cats.

Dozens of feline eyes glow in the dim room. Romeo stands

nervously. The Apothecary extracts a small chemist's vial

from inside a 'Statue of Our Lady' table lamp - he now

speaks with cool professionalism.

 APOTHECARY

 Drink it off and if you had the

 strength of twenty men it would

 dispatch you straight.

Romeo takes the vial and hands over the money.

 ROMEO

 There is my gold - worse poison to

 men's souls

 Than these poor compounds that thou

 mayst not sell.

INT. BALTHASAR'S CAR. NIGHT.

Motor running, Balthasar waits in the alley outside the

apartment building. He checks the rear view mirror and

freezes. At the end of the alleyway a police car crawls to

a halt.

EXT. ALLEYWAY. NIGHT.

Romeo exits the building, and as he does so, the streetlight

catches his face. The Cop's and Romeo's eyes meet.

INT. POLICE CAR. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: The cop.

 COP

 This is that banished haughty

 Montague.

INT. BALTHASAR'S CAR.

Balthasar cracks; he guns the engine and the car lurches

forward.

EXT. ALLEYWAY. NIGHT.

Tires screech as Romeo dives into the passenger seat of

Balthasar's moving vehicle.

Siren blaring, the police car gives chase.

AERIAL SHOT. NIGHT.

Balthasar's car winds through traffic - the patrol car

gaining.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF TOWN. NIGHT.

A police car U-turns over a median strip.

EXT. BALTHASAR'S CAR. NIGHT.

TIGHT ON: A rusted brown hood.

The tortured engine screams as Balthasar negotiates the

speeding car through city traffic.

CRANE UP: Red and blue police light approach fast.

INT. PRECINCT OFFICE. NIGHT.

Captain Prince barrels through the corridors of police

headquarters pulling on his flying jacket.

EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

TIGHT ON: A smoking tire as it lays rubber to the asphalt.

Balthasar grits his teeth as he weaves the car through the

impossibly tight space between a container truck and a bus.

WHIP PAN: The patrol car is almost upon them when... in a

seemingly suicidal manoeuvre Balthasar throws his car into a

right-angle turn across four lanes of oncoming traffic.

Horns blare.

CUT TO: A skidding, squealing, out of control sedan, braking

to avoid collision.

Miraculously, Balthasar's vehicle shoots out of it its path

and onto the other side of the roadway.

The sedan slams into the following patrol car.

EXT. DRIVEWAY. NIGHT.

Balthasar's car speeds into the driveway of the Verona Beach

Eternal Rest Cemetery.

INT. CHOPPER. NIGHT.

Captain Prince scans the night time city below. He speaks

to the pilot and the chopper banks sharply.

EXT. CEMETERY. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A stone angel etched against the night sky.

PAN DOWN: Romeo pulls a crowbar from the trunk of the parked

car. Police sirens sound in the distance.

Romeo eyes Balthasar intently.

 ROMEO

 Upon thy life, whatever thou

 hearest

 Or seest, stand all aloof. Give me

 the light -

Balthasar stands motionless - Romeo rips the torch from his

hands and strides into the cemetery. Balthasar follows.

 BALTHASAR

 I do beseech you...

Romeo turns, punching Balthasar hard; he goes down, blood

spurting from his nose.

 ROMEO

 Do not interrupt me in my course or

 By heaven I will tear thee joint by

 joint

 And strew this hungry churchyard

 with thy limbs!

Balthasar slowly rises. Both boys are trying hard not to cry.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 The time and my intents are savage

 wild,

 More fierce and more inexorable far

 Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.

 BALTHASAR

 I will be gone and not trouble ye.

Romeo smiles.

 ROMEO

 So shalt thou show me friendship.

They embrace as Romeo whispers.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Live, and be prosperous; and

 farewell, good fellow.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: A crowbar wrenches at ornate glass and iron doors.

PULL BACK: The Gothic structure of the mausoleum rears

against the night sky. Romeo frenziedly attacks the gates

of the small side chapel.

 ROMEO

 Thou detestable maw, thou womb of

 death,

 Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to

 open.

With a final heave the doors scrape open.

Silence.

ROMEO'S P.O.V.: An endless marble corridor lit by hundreds

of tiny flickering eternal flames.

CLOSE ON: Romeo. He murmurs:

 ROMEO

 In despite I'll cram thee with more

 food.

Suddenly a hurricane wind and whirr of machinery: like a

huge black insect, Captain Prince's chopper swoops down over

the mausoleum.

Romeo is caught in the glare of the chopper's burning arc

light. Sirens scream, police units race through the cemetery.

Blinded, Romeo fires wildly toward the chopper.

The police cars screech to a halt.

CLOSE ON: A police marksman in the chopper. His finger

squeezes the rifle trigger.

BANG! A bullet slams into Romeo's shoulder. The other cops

open fire and Romeo is sent reeling backwards into the

mausoleum in a fusillade of bullets.

INT. CHOPPER. NIGHT.

An angry Captain Prince bellows into the radio.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Hold! Hold!

The police hold their fire.

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Bleeding from the shoulder wound, Romeo drags shut the heavy

double doors of the chapel. He bangs off three shots

through a pane of broken glass and screams at the police.

 ROMEO

 Stand all aloof!

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Outside the chopper hovers. Police take up siege positions.

Captain Prince's voice echoes through the bullhorn.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Romeo, come forth, come forth.

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Romeo uses the crowbar to wedge the doors shut. He bangs

off another shot as he yells out at the Police.

 ROMEO

 Tempt not a desperate man!

Romeo waits. There is no response from the cops.

INT. CHOPPER. NIGHT.

As the chopper settles to earth, Captain Prince speaks into

the radio.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Bring forth these enemies Montague

 and Capulet.

INT. PRIEST'S CAR. NIGHT.

Orange rescue lights reflect through the windshield of the

priest's car as it crawls past the crashed sedan and police

vehicle.

Father Laurence thumps the steering wheel in frustration.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Saint Francis be my speed tonight!

Across the road Police swarm around the entrance to the

cemetery.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Fear comes upon me.

 O, much I fear some ill unthrifty

 thing.

HOLD ON: The green glow of the car clock as the seconds

pulse away.

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

TRACK: Down the marble corridor lit by the eternal flames.

DISCOVER: Romeo. He weakly stands at the entrance to the

viewing chapel.

The chapel is dark.

As Romeo's eyes adjust he can just see, picked out by a

shaft of blue moonlight, the glowing figure of a sleeping

girl. He moves down the aisle past the tombs of long-dead

Capulets.

Romeo is close now. He halts as if in the presence of an

unbelievable vision. He lights a match and the room glows

gold. The warm light reveals a Juliet even more beautiful

in seeming death.

Romeo lights some of the hundreds of candles that surround

her.

 ROMEO

 O my love, my wife,

 Death, that hath sucked the honey

 of thy breath,

 Hath had no power yet upon thy

 beauty,

 Thou art not conquered. Beauty's

 ensign yet

 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy

 cheeks,

 And death's pale flag is not

 advanced there.

Romeo kneels close, as if not wanting to wake a sleeping

child. Unconscious tears fall from his eyes as he whispers.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Ah, dear Juliet, why art thou yet

 so fair?

 Shall I believe that unsubstantial

 death

 Is amorous and keeps thee here in

 dark

 To be his paramour? For fear of

 that

 I still will stay with thee. Here,

 oh here

 Will I set up my everlasting rest

 And shake the yoke of inauspicious

 stars

 From this world-wearied flesh.

He lays himself close.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 Eyes, look your last.

 Arms, take your last embrace. And,

 lips, O you

 The doors of breath, seal with a

 righteous kiss...

Gently Romeo kisses Juliet's lips. Ever so slightly,

Juliet's hand moves - Romeo does not notice.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 A dateless bargain to engrossing

 death.

Romeo drinks from the vial; the power of the compound is

immediate. He convulses and falls, his head resting on

Juliet.

 ROMEO (CONT.)

 (fighting for breath)

 O true apothecary, thy drugs are

 quick.

Behind Romeo's head we can see Juliet's eyes opening. Romeo

sucks the last few breaths of life into his lungs. Through

a blurry consciousness Juliet becomes aware of Romeo.

 JULIET

 Oh Romeo, what's here?

Forcing herself up, she cradles his head in her arms.

Romeo's clear wide eyes stare back, he is completely still

but for the sound of weak breaths desperately drawn across

motionless lips.

Juliet finds the vial clenched in Romeo's hand. Tears slip

from her eyes.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 Drunk all, and left

 No friendly drop to help me after.

 I will kiss thy lips.

 Haply some poison yet doth hang on

 them

 To make me die with a restorative.

She delicately kisses Romeo's lips.

 JULIET (CONT.)

 (a heart-broken whisper)

 Thy lips are warm.

Desperately the lovers cling to each other. With all his

desire to stay alive, Romeo whispers:

 ROMEO

 Thus with a kiss I die.

There is no breath. He is still. Silence. Sobbing, Juliet

hugs the lifeless Romeo to her.

 JULIET

 Romeo. O' my true love Romeo.

She looks to the gun in his hand.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

TRACK: Quickly past Captain Prince and the Capulets taking

cover behind a patrol car.

Two police officers urgently convey Montague and his wife

toward them.

Discover Father Laurence arriving.

CUT TO: Father Laurence's P.O.V.: Patrol cars, lights

flashing, surround the mausoleum.

He sees, through the open door of a police car, a hand-

cuffed youth. It is Balthasar. Father Laurence hurries to

him.

It is dawning on Father Laurence.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Balthasar?

 BALTHASAR

 (desperately)

 I brought news of Juliet's death...

 And then in post came Romeo from

 Mantua

 To this same place... to this same

 monument.

CLOSE ON: Father Laurence.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 How long hath he been there?

 BALTHASAR

 Full half an hour.

Father Laurence turns towards the mausoleum.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 Romeo.

 (a shock of realisation)

 The lady stirs...

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

TRACK SLOW TOWARD: Juliet: Sobbing uncontrollably she prises

the gun from Romeo's hand.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Father Laurence, desperate, breaks through the police line

and runs toward the mausoleum.

CUT TO: The parents and Captain Prince.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 Hold! Go not forth!

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Juliet turns the gun on herself.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

CLOSE ON: Father Laurence, he screams as he mounts the

mausoleum stairs.

 FATHER LAURENCE

 The lady stirs!

CRACK! The sound of a single gun shot rips through the night.

CUT TO: Captain Prince.

CUT TO: The parents, a look of cold shock.

CUT TO: The priest - his cry echoes through the night.

INT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

Juliet lies peacefully on Romeo's chest. Her eyes awake. A

wash of deep red blood floods across them both. As we move

away from the forms of the two young lovers lit by a ring of

candles, the police burst in, guns ready to resolve what has

already been resolved. Continuing up, we pass through the

glass dome of the viewing chapel, and over the building.

EXT. MAUSOLEUM. NIGHT.

There, huddled at the base of the Mausoleum steps, are the

Montague and Capulet parents and Father Laurence.

From high up we see Captain Prince emerge from the Mausoleum

and speak to the group. A moment, then their cries float

gently up.

EXT. SKY. NIGHT.

We are travelling high into the sky now. The cries of the

parents and the buzz of radio calls fade to nothing.

EXT. VERONA BEACH STREET - CHRIST ROUNDABOUT-FROM AIR. DAWN.

As the sun struggled to rise, we push toward the figure of

Jesus silently surveying the city.

EXT. VERONA BEACH - CHRIST ROUNDABOUT. DAWN.

As Jesus' face fills the screen, droplets of water begin to

streak his cheeks.

HOLD: Music swells; the droplets grow to a torrent, and a

heavy rain begins to fall.

For a long beat, we stay with this image.

CRANE DOWN: From the Jesus. A sea of black umbrellas

stretches back from the steps of Freedom Tower.

EXT. FREEDOM TOWER. DAY.

At the top of the steps are a pair of flower strewn caskets.

Before the caskets stand Fulgencia and Gloria Capulet, and

Ted and Caroline Montague. They stare with blank,

uncomprehending sorrow.

Among the crowd we see the distraught faces of Benvolio,

Balthasar, Father Laurence and the Nurse.

The caskets are gently slid into a pair of long black cars.

Montague and Capulet descend the stairs. Captain Prince

blocks their path. He holds them in his gaze.

 CAPTAIN PRINCE

 See what a scourge is laid upon

 your hate,

 That heaven finds means to kill

 your joys with love;

 And I, for winking at your discords

 too,

 Have lost a brace of kinsmen. All

 are punished.

The Prince steps aside. The procession moves off. Montague

and Capulet look to one another, a moment, and then the two

adversaries together follow the bodies of their dead children.

AERIAL SHOT: The rain falls. Two black cars lead the people

of Verona Beach in a sorrowful parade.

As the cars pass beneath the towering effigy of Jesus, the

image pixilates into a television picture.

PULL OUT: A TV anchor woman watches the image on a studio

monitor.

She turns:

 ANCHOR WOMAN

 (to camera)

 A glooming peace this morning with

 it brings:

 The sun for sorrow will not show

 his head.

 Go hence, to have more talk of

 these sad things.

 Some shall be pardoned, and some

 punished,

 For never was a story of more woe

 Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

The anchor woman changes beat to the next story; but her

dialogue fades, and her image gets smaller as the television

recedes into a black distance.

The music that reminds us most of these two lost lives

swells. When the television is very small it is switched off.

BLACK SCREEN. HOLD A BEAT.

 END CREDITS