

Lesson 45

- Read this summary of *Romeo and Juliet* by Jennifer Appel.

Romeo and Juliet – romance or tragedy? You decide after reading this story fueled by revenge, attraction, secrecy and rivalry.

This play takes place in Verona, Italy, in a time when families are feuding and whom one is related to is of the utmost importance for whom one can befriend or marry.

The story opens with a street fight between the servants of the dueling families – the Montagues and Capulets. The Prince stops everything and sets up a new rule that any further fights that threaten the peace are punishable by death.

Count Paris wants to marry Juliet, but Juliet’s father asks him to wait a couple of years and invites him to a ball that he has planned. Her mother and nurse try to convince Juliet to court the Count.

Meanwhile, when Romeo attends a banquet put on by his family’s rival, the Capulets, while trying to see the woman he loves – spoiler alert, it’s not Juliet – he instead finds himself drawn to the very young Juliet. Not knowing that she herself is a Capulet and therefore the sworn enemy of his family, the Montagues, he kisses her and falls head over heels with her in one night. They determine to marry the next day with the help of Juliet’s nurse.

Before they can make it to the wedding, another street fight breaks out. In the midst of Romeo trying to stop the fight, Juliet’s cousin, Tybalt, is killed. Romeo is banished for the killing.

Aided by the friar, Juliet fakes her own death in order to be free to marry Romeo. A note is sent to Romeo to let him in on the scheme, but he doesn’t receive the note in time. Instead, he sees what he believes to be her lifeless body in the tomb and drinks poison to die. She wakes up and finds him dead next to her and losing all hope for life, she stabs herself. The family discovers the twisted fates of the young lovers and calls off the long-standing family feud. The pair were able to accomplish in their deaths the one thing that had never been possible before – peace between their families.

Lesson 85

- Read Book 2, Stage 5 of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

Book 2, Stage 5

Now I saw in my dream, that they went forward until they were come to the brow of the Hill; where Piety, bethinking herself, cried out, Alas, I have forgot what I intended to bestow upon Christiana and her companions: I will go back and fetch it. So she ran and fetched it. While she was gone, Christiana thought she heard, in a grove a little way off on the right hand, a most curious melodious note, with words much like these:

“Through all my life thy favor is
So frankly showed to me,
That in thy House for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.”

And listening still, she thought she heard another answer it, saying,

“For why? The Lord our God is good;
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.”

So Christiana asked Prudence who it was that made those curious notes. They are, answered she, our country birds: they sing these notes but seldom, except it be at the spring, when the flowers appear, and the sun shines warm, and then you may hear them all day long. I often, said she, go out to hear them; we also oft-times keep them tame in our house. They are very fine company for us when we are melancholy: also they make the woods, and groves, and solitary places, places desirable to be in.

By this time Piety was come again. So she said to Christiana, Look here, I have brought thee a scheme of all those things that thou hast seen at our house, upon which thou mayest look when thou findest thyself forgetful, and call those things again to remembrance for thy edification and comfort.

Now they began to go down the hill into the Valley of Humiliation. It was a steep hill, and the way was slippery; but they were very careful; so they got down pretty well. When they were down in the valley, Piety said to Christiana, This is the place where Christian your husband met with the foul fiend Apollyon, and where they had that dreadful fight that they had: I know you cannot but have heard thereof. But be of good courage; as long as you have here Mr. Great-Heart to be your guide and conductor, we hope you will fare the better. So when these two had committed the pilgrims unto the conduct of their guide, he went forward, and they went after.

Mr. Great-Heart: Then said Mr. Great-Heart, We need not be so afraid of this valley, for here is nothing to hurt us, unless we procure it to ourselves. It is true, Christian did here meet with Apollyon, with whom he had also a sore combat: but that fray was the fruit of those slips that he got in his going down the hill: for they that get slips there, must look for combats here. And hence it is, that this valley has got so hard a name. For the common people, when they hear that some...

[THE WHOLE CHAPTER IS INCLUDED IN THE READER. ALL READINGS ARE FULLY INCLUDED.]