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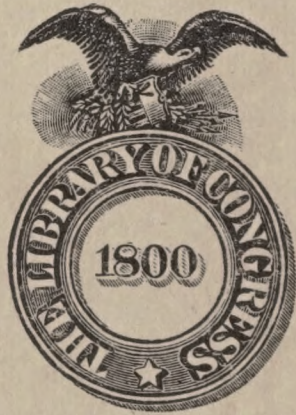
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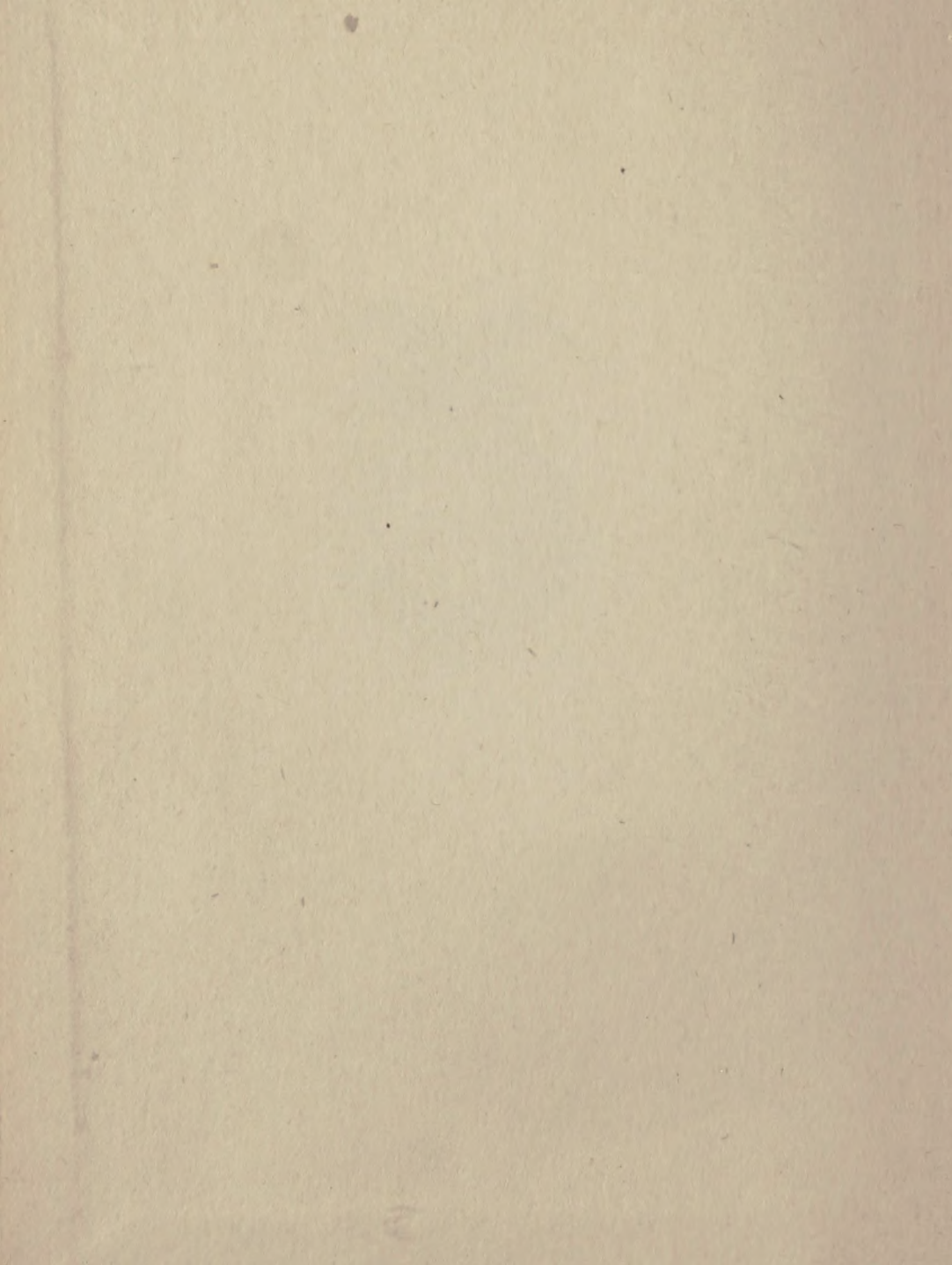
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THE BVRIAL OF  
ROMEO & JVLJET

A PROSE FANCY

*by*

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE





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THE BURIAL  
OF ROMEO  
AND JULIET


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THE BVRIAL  
OF ROMEO  
AND JVLLET







A PROSE  
FANCY BY  
RICHARD LE  
GALLIENNE



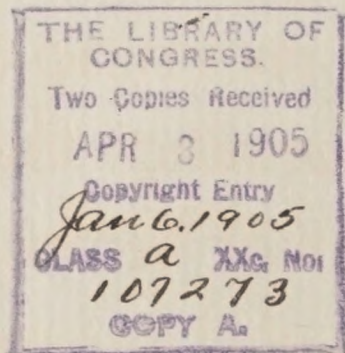




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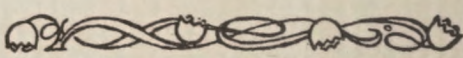
# THE BVRIAL OF ROMEO & JVLJET




ne morning of all  
mornings the citi-  
zens of Verona were  
startled by strange  
news. Tragic forces, to which they  
had been accustomed to pay  
little heed, had been at work in  
their city during the dark hours,  
and young Romeo of the Mon-  
tagues, handsome, devil-me-care





lad as they had known him, and little Juliet of the Capulets, that mad-cap, merry, gentle young mistress, lay dead, side by side in the church of Santa Maria. 

Death! surely they were used to death! and Love, flower of the clove! they were used to *love*. But here were love and death, that somehow they could not understand.  So they hurried in wondering



groups to Santa Maria, that they might gaze at the dead lovers, and thus perhaps come to understand.



omeo and Juliet lay receiving their guests in the vault of the Capulets, with a strange smile of welcome for all who came. And their presence-chamber was bright with candles and flowers, and sweet with the sweet



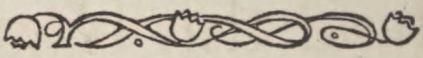
swell of death. The air the  
had struck in their (2) night  
and their last long looks  
heavenly love still hangs above  
the dark corners as that is  
where a rose has been held  
a little while the memory  
is breath. Yet that occasion  
in the dark but things  
you might have done you  
very beautiful love. The  
also you have had but  
thought the eyes

smell of death. The air that had drunk in their wild words and their last long looks of heavenly love still hung about the dark corners, as the air where a rose has been holds a little while the memory of its breath. Yes! that morning, in that dank but shining tomb, you might draw into you the very breath of love. The air you breathed had passed through the sweet lungs of

Juliet, it had been etherealised with her holy passion, and washed clean with her lovely words. And now, for a little while yet, it feasted on the fair peace of their glad young faces. To-morrow, or the next day, or the next week, they would belong to the unvisited treasure-house of the past, but now this morning of all mornings, this day that could never come again, they still





belonged to the real and radiant present. 

Flowers there are that bloom but once in a hundred years, but here in this tomb had blossomed one of those marvellous flowers that bloom but once throughout eternity. Poets and kings in after-times, O men of Verona, will yearn to have seen what you look upon to-day. For you, you thick and greasy citizens, are



chosen out of all time to behold this beauty. There were once in the world thousands of men and women who had heard the very words of Christ as they fell from His lips, words that we may only read. There have been men, actual, living, foolish men, who have looked on at the valour of Horatius, men who, from the crowded banks of the Nile, have watched the living body



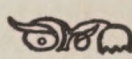


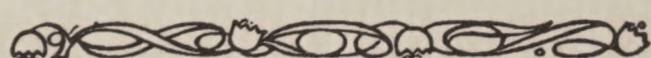
of Cleopatra step into her gilded barge, men who, standing idle in the streets of Florence, have seen the love-light start in the great Dante's eyes, seen his hand move to his laden heart, as the little Beatrice passed him by among her maidens. Base men of the past, by the indulgent accident of time, have been granted to behold these wonders, and now for you, O men of Verona, a

like wonder has been born.



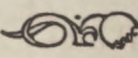
Romeo and Juliet  
lay receiving their  
guests in the vault  
of the Capulets,

with a strange smile of wel-  
come for all who came. 

It had been an innocent little  
desire, yet had all the world  
come against it. It had been  
a simple little desire, yet too  
strong for all the world to  
break. 





Strange this enmity of the world to love, as though men should take arms against the song of a bird, or plot against the opening of a flower. 

But now, what was this strange homage to a love that a few hours ago had no friend in all the daylight, a fearful bliss beneath the secret moon? But yesterday a stupid old nurse, a herb-gathering friar, a rascally apothecary, had been their



only friends, and now was all  
the world come here to do  
their bidding.

No need to steal again be-  
neath the shade of orchard  
walls, no need again to heed  
if lark or nightingale sang in  
the reddening east. For the  
world had grown all warm  
to love, warm and kind as  
June to the rose.










Three days lay Romeo and Juliet receiving their guests in the vault of the Capulets, with that strange smile of welcome for all who came. Three days the world worshipped the love it could not understand, but still came dense and denser throngs to worship. For the news of the wonderful flower that had blossomed in Verona had

gone far and wide, and travellers from distant cities kept pouring in to look at those strange young lovers, who had deemed the world well lost so that they might leave it together. 


Then the governor of the city decreed, as the time drew near when the two lovers must be left to their peace, and it was ill that any should lose the sight of this marvel,





that on the fourth day they should be carried through the streets in the eyes of all the people, and then be buried together in the vault of the Capulets ~ for by this burial in the same tomb, says the old chronicler, who was first honoured with the telling of their sweet story, the governor hoped to bring about a peace between the Montagues and Capulets, at least



for a little while. 

Meanwhile, though Verona was a city of many trades and professions, and love and death were idle things, yet was there little said of business all these days, and little else was done but talk of the two lovers, of whom, indeed, it was true, as it has seldom been true out of holy writ, that death was swallowed up in victory. During these days, also, there



the lightest of sorceries  
ven-courte faces wore a ge  
kindly to their wives and  
kind. Let once more look  
and hand heart grew a hid  
broken hearts must hide awa  
the birds sing to woe's de  
in the first days of spring  
it is to befalling - as when  
and was killing the air was  
spirit of love had acted the  
the days a through the way  
spoke in language were they ever

stole a strange sweetness over the city, as though the very spirit of love had nested there, and was filling the air with its soft breathing — as when, in the first days of spring, the birds sing so sweetly that broken hearts must hide away, and hard hearts grow a little kind. Men once more spoke kindly to their wives, and even coarse faces wore a gentle light — just as sometimes at

evening the setting sun will  
turn to tenderness even black  
rocks and frowning towers.



here were many  
wild stories afloat  
about the end of  
the lovers. Some  
said one way, and some another.  
By some the story went  
that Romeo was already dead  
before Juliet had awakened  
from her swoon, but others  
declared that the poison had





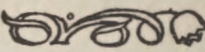
not worked upon him until Juliet's awakening had made him awhile forget that he was to die. There were those who professed to know the very words of their wild farewell, and in fact there had been several witnesses of Juliet's agony over the body of her lord. These had told how first she had raved and clung to him, and called him 'Romeo,' 'Sweet Sir Romeo,' 'Hus-



band,' and many flower-like names, and had petted him and wooed him to come back. Then on a sudden she had cried, 'God-a-mercy—how cold thou art!' and looked at him long and strangely. Then had she grown stern, and anon soft. 'Canst thou not come back, my love? Then must I follow thee. Not so far art thou on the way of death, but that I shall over-

and said many things  
which had power of him  
and would him to come back  
then gave sudden she had  
said, God-a-mercy - how  
it had been and looked at  
in long hand as might I have  
and she groans before and  
contorts. Come thou now  
and thy charity love I have  
and follow thee. Now so  
I am in doubt on the way of  
it, but that I shall cover



take thee, and together shall we go to Pluto's realm, and seek a kinder world.' 

Thereat she had plunged Romeo's dagger into her side, though some said she had stopped her heart's beating by the strong will of her great love. Yea ~ such were the distracted rumours ~ some averred that at the last she had cursed Christ and his saints, and called upon Venus,

whom, it was rumoured in  
awe-struck whispers, was be-  
ing worshipped once more  
in secret corners of the  
world.



It was strong  
noon when, on  
the fourth day,  
Romeo and Ju-  
liet were carried through the  
bright and solemn streets,  
that the world might be  
saved; saved as ever by the

... it was found to  
... whipper, was be  
... once more  
... of the  
...  
... strong  
... noon when, on  
... the fourth day  
... Raimo and Ju  
... through the  
... and other  
... night be  
... by the





spectacle and the worship of a mysterious nobility, an uncomprehended greatness, a beauty which haunts not its daily dreams, lifted up by the humble gaze of devout eyes into the empyrean of greater souls, stirred to an unfamiliar passion, and fired with glimpses of a strange, unworldly truth.

In the light of the sun, the faces of the two lovers, as



they lay amid their flowers,  
seemed to have grown a lit-  
tle weary, but they still wore  
their sweet and royal smile,  
and their laurelled brows  
were very white and proud.

And in the faces that looked  
upon them, as they moved  
slowly by, with sweet death  
music, and the hushed march-  
ing of feet, and the wafted  
odour of lilies, there was to  
be seen strangely blent a






great pity for their tragedy and a heavenly tenderness for their love. It was like a dream passing down the streets of a dream, so deep and tender was the silence, for only the hearts of men were speaking; though here and there a girl sobbed, or a young man buried his face in his sleeve, and the sternest eyes were dashed with the holy water of tears. And


with the pity and tenderness,  
who shall say but that in all  
that silent heart-speech there  
was no little envy of the two  
who had loved so truly and  
died in the springtide of their  
love, before the ways of love  
had grown dusty with its  
summer, or dreary with its  
autumn, before its dreams  
had petrified into duties, and  
its passion deadened into use?  
'Would it were thou and I,





said many wedded eyes one  
to the other, delusively warm  
and soft for a moment, but  
all cold and hard again on  
the morrow. 

And maybe some poet  
would say in his heart:

‘If you loved her living, my  
Romeo, what were your love  
could you but see her dead!’  
for indeed life has no beauty  
so wonderful as the beauty  
of death. 





nd, as in all places  
and times, there  
was a base rem-  
nant that gaped  
and worshipped not, and  
in their hearts resented all  
this distinction paid to a  
nobility they could not rec-  
ognise, as the like had grum-  
bled when Cimabue's Madon-  
na had been carried through  
the streets in glory. But of  
these there is no need that






we should take account, any more than of the beasts that moved head down amid the pastures outside the town, knowing not of the wonder that was passing within. For the ass will munch his thistles though the Son of Man be his rider, nor will the sheep look aside from his grazing though Apollo be the herdsman.





t length the sacred pageant was ended, gone like the passing of an aerial music, and the people went to their homes silent, with haunted eyes; while the Earth, which had given this beauty, took it back to herself, and one more Persephone of human loveliness was shut within the gates of the forgetful grave. 





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