

ORIGINAL TEXT**JULIET**

Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it.
If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
55And with this knife I'll help it presently.

(shows him a knife)

God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou
our hands.

And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo
sealed,

Shall be the label to another deed,

60Or my true heart with treacherous
revolt

Turn to another, this shall slay them both.

Therefore out of thy long-experienced
time,

Give me some present counsel, or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody
knife

65Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the commission of thy years and
art

Could to no issue of true honor bring.

Be not so long to speak. I long to die

If what thou speak'st speak not of
remedy.

JULIET

O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,

80From off the battlements of yonder
tower; or walk in thievish ways; or bid
me lurk where serpents are; chain me
with roaring bears; or shut me nightly in
a chanel house, o'ercovered quite with
dead men's rattling bones,

85With reeky shanks and yellow chapless
skulls; or bid me go into a new-made
grave and hide me with a dead man in his
shroud— Things that, to hear them told,
have made me tremble— and I will do it
without fear or doubt,

90To live an unstained wife to my sweet
love.

MODERN TEXT**JULIET**

Don't tell me that you've heard about this marriage, Friar, unless you can tell me how to prevent it. If you who are so wise can't help, please be kind enough to call my solution wise.

(she shows him a knife)

And I'll solve the problem now with this knife. God joined my heart to Romeo's.

You joined our hands. And before I—who was married to Romeo by you—am married to another man, I'll kill myself.

You are wise and you have so much experience. Give me some advice about the current situation. Or watch. Caught between these two difficulties, I'll act like a judge with my bloody knife. I will truly and honorably resolve the situation that you can't fix, despite your experience and education. Don't wait long to speak. I want to die if what you say isn't another solution.

JULIET

Oh, you can tell me to jump off the battle posts of any tower, or to walk down the crime-ridden streets of a slum. Or tell me to sit in a field full of poisonous snakes. Chain me up with wild bears. Hide me every night in a morgue full of dead bodies with wet, smelly flesh and skulls without jawbones. Or tell me to climb down into a freshly dug grave, and hide me with a dead man in his tomb. All those ideas make me tremble when I hear them named. But I will do them without fear or dread in order to be a pure wife to my sweet love.