

Dialectical Journal  
Romeo and Juliet  
Act 2

Scene 1

“Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie /  
And young affection gapes to be his heir...

The sonnet begins Act Two by confirming that Romeo is no longer in love with Rosaline and that he now loves Juliet. The sonnet goes on to tell us that this is a conflict because the two are sworn enemies but their passion for one another motivates them to put the ancient grudge aside. When they are together all of their troubles are forgotten.

Where is Romeo and what is he thinking?

Romeo is hiding in the Capulet's orchard. He says, “Can I go forward when my heart is here?” (2.1, 1-2)

Where is Romeo and what is he thinking?

Romeo wants to go find Juliet but his friends are leaving. He decides to hide from his friends and let them leave without him. Romeo has ostracized himself once again from his friends and family. At the beginning of Act 1 he was hiding in a grove sycamore trees. In the beginning of Act 2 he is hiding in trees again, but these trees bare fruit. The fruit, although only implied is symbolic of the nourishment Romeo craves... that nourishment is a romantic love that is returned.

What are Benvolio and Mercutio doing?

“Go then for 'tis vain / To seek him here  
that means not to be found.” (2.1, 44-45)

What are Benvolio and Mercutio doing?

Benvolio and Romeo called for Romeo to join them They think he is still depressed over Rosaline so he disappeared into the trees again to feel sorry for himself.

Dramatic Irony

Mercutio says, “I conjure thee by  
Rosaline's bright eyes.” (2.1, 19)

Mercutio and Benvolio think Romeo is still in love with Rosaline. We, the audience, know that he did not climb over the wall to weep for Rosaline, but to find his new love, Juliet.