

HANDOUT 1  
THE PROLOGUE TO ACT ONE

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.  
The fearful passage      of their death-marked love  
And the continuance      of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end,      naught could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic      of our stage;  
The which, if you      with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss,      our toil shall strive to mend.

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