

AFTER JULIET

by Sharman Macdonald

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A tense truce holds between the Capulets and the Montagues after the deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Benvolio, Romeo's best friend, is in love with ROSALINE, Juliet's cousin; but ROSALINE is bent on revenge. Here we find ROSALINE at Juliet's grave.

ROSALINE: Your spirit haunts me, Juliet.

I see more of you dead
Than I did when you were alive...

Come on, Juliet.

We were hardly close as cousins.
You were too small, too pretty, too rich,
Too thin and too much loved for me to cope with.
'Spoilt' is the word that springs to mind
Though I don't want to speak ill of the dead.

(She touches the stamen of the lily. Yellow nicotine pollen stains her fingers. She rubs it in.)

All a flower does is wither
It's the memories that stay for ever:
So they tell me.
So what do I recall of you?
Juliet, daddy's princess, rich,
Mummy's darling, quite a bitch.
You scratched my face once,
From here to here;
I have the scar. I have it yet.
You can see it quite clearly

In the sunlight;

A silver line.

You wanted my favourite doll.

And of course you got it.

For though I was scarred, you cried.

And your nurse swooped down

And took the moppet from me.

Spanked me hard for making you unhappy;

Gave my doll to you, her dearest baby.

Later you stole my best friend;

Wooed her with whisper;

Told her gossip's secrets;

Gave her trinkets, sweetmeats.

Later still, you took my love

And didn't know you'd done it;

Then having taken him

You let him die.

If you'd swallowed the friar's potion earlier

You would have wakened.

And my love would be alive.

None of this would have happened.

I know you, Juliet.

You hesitated, frightened.

Didn't take the stuff until dawn.

Wakened too late in the tomb.

In the night I dream of Romeo.

He's reaching his arms out from the vault.

The poison has him in its hold.

He fills my nights with his longing for life.

Until I am afraid to go to sleep.

For though I love him still

I cannot soothe his pain.

If I could, I would

But it is not me he's reaching for.

So why, Juliet,

Should I spend my cash

On flowers for you?...

...So. So. Sweet Coz.

Here. This is the last flower

You'll get from me.

Death flowers have the sweetest scent.

(She casts the flower down. Shrugs.)

That's that bit done.