



A thousand times good night

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Nurse:

[*Within*] Madam!

Juliet:

I come, anon.—But if thou meanest not well,
I do beseech thee—

Nurse:

Madam!

Juliet:

By and by, I come—
To cease thy strife, and leave me to my grief.
To-morrow will I send.

Romeo:

So thrive my soul—

Juliet:

A thousand times good night! [*Exit above*]

Romeo:

A thousand times the worse, to want thy light.
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

[Romeo And Juliet Act 2, scene 2, 149–157](#)

With her nurse on the lookout, Juliet wraps up, for now, her famous balcony conversation with Romeo [[see ROMEO, ROMEO, WHEREFORE ART THOU ROMEO?](#)]. Punctuated by the nurse's warnings, Juliet's speech becomes distracted. Still unsure of her feelings and of Romeo's love, she nervously pleads that if his intentions are merely to toy with her (if he means not well), he should just leave her alone. Then she turns around, pledges to send a message to him on the morrow, and parts with her famous "A thousand times good night!"

Romeo refers yet again to Juliet as a source of light [[see WHAT LIGHT THROUGH YONDER WINDOW BREAKS?](#)]. Then he delivers a revealing couplet that sounds like a scene-ender, but (as much as we might hope it is) is not. The young lovebird, if he's not still in school, isn't long out of it; so perhaps it's natural for him to compare Juliet to a schoolbook. But note the artful inversion: he "goes toward" his lover as he leaves school, eagerly, and leaves her as he goes to school, "with heavy looks." Other Shakespearean characters echo Romeo's antipathy for the classroom. In a later play, the satirist Jaques describes youth, the second age of man, with this image: "the whining schoolboy, with his satchel/ And shining morning face, creeping like a snail/ Unwillingly to school" (*As You Like It*, Act 2, scene 7, 145–147).

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