Oxymoron: Romeo and Juliet Act 1 Resource Sheet #5

An **Oxymoron** is putting two contradictory words together for effect. Some examples are: jumbo shrimp, wise fool, seriously joking, genuine imitation and good grief!

Shakespeare used oxymoron quite often to express mixed emotions in both his plays and sonnets. A famous oxymoron from MacBeth is "Fair is foul and foul is fair.

But as there are so many, let's stick with the ones from Romeo and Juliet and then we'll try to come up with some of our own. *Romeo and Juliet* is filled with oxymorons but that's sort of how love is. It's wonderful and it's painful!

Act 1, Scene 1

"O <u>brawling love</u>! O <u>loving hate</u>! O anything of nothing first create! O <u>heavy lightness</u>, <u>serious vanity!</u> Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms! <u>Feather of lead, bright smoke</u>, <u>cold fire</u>, <u>sick health</u>! <u>Still-waking sleep</u>, that is not what it is! This love feel I, that feel no love in this!"

What is Romeo saying in this speech? Who is he talking to and what has upset him? Does he have mixed emotions about something?