

A Plague On Both Your Houses

This flash fiction story was written by Colin M. Drysdale, the author of [For Those In Peril On The Sea](#). Copyright: Colin M. Drysdale, 2013. While this story is free to download, it must not be stored or made available on any site other than <http://www.ForThoseInPeril.net>. The original can be found at http://www.forthoseinperil.net/Free_Stories_From_Colin_M_Drysdale.htm.

Mercutio struggled to break into the crypt which held the bodies of Romeo and his young bride. The fighting between their two families had gone on too long and had cost too many lives, including his own. The need for revenge burned deep within Mercutio's body and it was this which had brought him back when he should have remained still and lifeless in his grave. He knew he wasn't alive as such, instead he was little more than a walking corpse; he couldn't think clearly, he couldn't speak but he could move and what was left of his mind was consumed with an overwhelming desire to wreak revenge on those he blamed for his untimely death. With his dying words Mercutio had sworn to bring a plague on both their houses and now he was able to move again, he was going to make it happen. This wouldn't be a biblical plague of locusts or some creeping disease; instead it would be a plague of his fellow dead, and at their head would be the two young lovers who'd died because their families bore a grudge for reasons none of them could even remember.

Having been dead for more than a week, Mercutio's muscles weren't as strong as they'd been in life and he struggled to get into the crypt. Somehow he sensed that since he wasn't alive he couldn't heal himself, and that if he damaged his gradually-decaying body he might not be able to satisfy the desire for revenge he felt burning through every fibre left of his being. He knew this meant he should be careful, but this hunger drove him onwards. Risking injury, Mercutio put his full weight to the door. With a sudden groan he finally broke through and he tumbled forward. Instinctively he put out his arms to try to break his fall, snapping off two fingers as he hit the ground. Mercutio stared at them for a moment, watching as they skittered across the earthen floor and came to rest against the wall of the crypt. He wasn't alive so it didn't hurt; instead it was just inconvenient. Leaving them where they lay, Mercutio slowly pulled himself to his feet and looked around. In the moonlight spilling through the broken door, he could see the bodies of the newly-married bride and her secret groom lying next to each other. Soon, like Mercutio, they'd move again, and then he'd send them to do his bidding, bringing the same havoc to the lives of their warring families that they had brought to his. When he was finished with them, the Capulets and the Montagues would be no more and Verona would be a better place for it. Then, and only then, would he let these star-crossed lovers rest, side by side, hand in hand, for all eternity.