

## Wherefore” Doesn’t Mean ”Why,” Either

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5 **Abstract**  
6 In ?R romeo and Juliet,? Juliet says ?O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Ro meo?? This  
7 has been translated as meaning why are you Romeo. A different interpretation comes from  
8 ?wherefore? itself and should be used instead. ?Fore? ?Fore? is at the end of ?wherefore? and  
9 it means ?before,? as shown by words like ?forearm? and ?forewarned.? At a wedding, a  
10 priest might say ?do you swear before all your family and friends...? And it should be noted  
11 that given that Shakespeare wrote ?Romeo and Juliet? hundreds of years ago, English was  
12 closer to German that it is now and that the German word for ?with what? is ?womit?, which  
13 literally translates into ?where with.? There is also a line in ?Romeo and Juliet? that ends  
14 with ?for thou hast need.? (Shakespeare, Rome and Julie, 1597, Act 4, Scene 3).

<sup>16</sup> *Index terms*—<sup>17</sup> In "Romeo and Juliet," Juliet says "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" This has been translated  
<sup>18</sup> as meaning why are you Romeo. A different interpretation comes from "wherefore" itself and should be used  
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## 20 1 "Fore"

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23 given that Shakespeare wrote "Romeo and Juliet" hundreds of years ago, 1 English was closer to German that it  
24 is now and that the German word for "with what" is "womit," which literally translates into "where with." There  
25 is also a line in "Romeo and Juliet" that ends with "for thou hast need." (Shakespeare, Rome and Julie, 1597,  
26 Act 4, Scene 3) 2 . "Wherefore" Doesn't Mean "Why," Either Antony Mastroianni in "Romeo and Juliet," Juliet  
27 says "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" This has been translated as meaning why are you Romeo.  
28 A different interpretation comes from "wherefore" itself and should be used instead.

## 29 2 GJHSS-A Classification

30 3 "Fore"

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33 given that Shakespeare wrote "Romeo and Juliet" hundreds of years ago, 1 English was closer to German than  
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35 There is also a line in "Romeo and Juliet" that ends with "for thou hast need." (Shakespeare, Rome and Julie,  
36 1597, Act 4, Scene 3) 2 .

37 In the rest of that soliloquy, Juliet says that she wants Romeo to deny his father and doff his name, essentially  
38 saying that she wants him to engage in some sort of reverse oath, fitting the imagery of someone swearing  
39 something before God. (Shakespeare, Act 2, Scene 2) And those two things have nothing to do with "why." And  
40 the rest of the soliloquy is about Romeo not needing to have that name, that he's not bound to it. That's shown  
41 by "it is nor hand nor foot." (same) Given this and the already mentioned translation of wherefore, it becomes  
42 clear that Juliet was actually saying "before where art thou Romeo?" to Romeo.

43 O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father and refuse thy name. Or if thou wilt not, be  
44 but sworn my love And I'll no longer be a Capulet. 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy: Thou art thyself, though

45 not a Montague. What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot Nor arm nor face nor any other part Belonging to  
46 a man. O be some other name. What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell  
47 as sweet; So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd, Retain that dear perfection which he owes Without that  
48 title. Romeo, doff thy name, And [in return] for that name, which is no part of thee, Take all myself. (same)

49 1 Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Romeo-and-Juliet> 2 Folger Shakespeare Library,  
50 <https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeare-works/romeo-and-juliet/read/>, full text Defining "wherefore"  
51 as "before where" explains why we have words like "whereafter." And "fore" existed in Old English,  
52 with one definition of it being "before" (Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary online, <https://bosworthtoller.com/search?q=fore>).

### 4 That Passage in Romeo and Juliet

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