

The development, written after the first performance in 1870, recalls the feud between the two families, along with hints of the liturgical opening theme. A final battle theme is played, and two large orchestra hits with cymbal crashes signal the suicide of the two lovers. The woodwinds play homage to the lovers, and a final statement of the love theme can be heard once more. This expressive epilogue, recollecting the dead lovers and the collapse of the families, was only added to the 1880 version. The overture closes with the full orchestra belting out a powerful B natural in unison.

In 1878 Tchaikovsky had an idea for an opera based on Shakespeare's tragedy. He wrote to his brother Modest in 1878 stating: "I will be writing *Romeo and Juliet*. All your objections evaporate before the enthusiasm with which this subject seizes me. This shall be my definitive work. It's funny how until now I hadn't seen how I was truly destined to set this drama to music....I want to set about this as soon as possible." This grand idea of Tchaikovsky's never came to fruition, although he thought about it in great detail and made sketches for a scene between Romeo and Juliet. These were found amongst the composer's manuscripts after his death, and completed by Sergei Taneyev as a duet for *Romeo and Juliet*.

The duet was first performed in Saint Petersburg, October 1894, conducted by Iurii Bleikhman.