she is not sure. And as she hesitates,
she sights the writhing body on the ground—
the bloody limbs—and, paler than boxwood,\(^9\)
retreats; she trembles—even as the sea
when light wind stirs its surface. She is quick
to recognize her lover; with loud blows
she beats her arms—though they do not deserve
such punishment. She tears her hair, enfolds
her love’s dear form; she fills his wounds with tears
that mingle with his blood; and while she plants
her kisses on his cold face, she laments:
“What struck you, Pyramus? Why have I lost
my love? It is your Thisbe—I—who call
your name! Respond! Lift up your fallen head!”
He heard her name; and lifting up his eyes
weighed down by death, he saw her face—and then
he closed his eyes again.

She recognized
her own shawl and his dagger’s ivory sheath.
She cried: “Dear boy, you died by your own hand:
your love has killed you. But I, too, command
the force to face at least this task: I can
claim love, and it will give me strength enough
to strike myself. I’ll follow you in death;
and men will say that I—unfortunate—
was both the cause and comrade of your fate.
Nothing but death could sever you from me;
but now death has no power to prevent
my joining you. I call upon his parents
and mine; I plead for him and me—do not
deny to us—united by true love,
who share this fatal moment—one same tomb.
And may you, mulberry, whose boughs now shade
one wretched body and will soon shade two,
forever bear these darkly colored fruits
as signs of our sad end, that men remember
the death we met together.” With these words,\(^9\)
she placed the dagger’s point beneath her breast,
then leaned against the blade still warm with her
dear lover’s blood. The gods and parents heard
her prayer, and they were stirred. Her wish was granted.

*Translated by Allen Mandelbaum*

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9. **boxwood**: a white or light yellow type of wood.