



# ROMEO & JULIET

William Shakespeare

WITH  
ONLINE  
RESOURCES

 SCHOLASTIC

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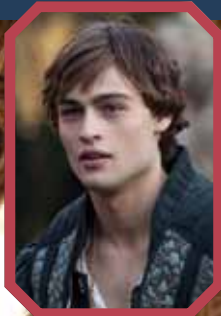
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**64**



THE CAPULETS

JULIET is 13 years old and has never been in love.



ROMEO is always falling in love and then he meets Juliet ...

PLACES

The story takes place in Verona and Mantua, in Italy.



THE MONTAGUES

BENVOLIO is Lord Montague's nephew.

LADY MONTAGUE is Romeo's mother.

LORD MONTAGUE is Romeo's father.

LORD CAPULET is Juliet's father.

LADY CAPULET is Juliet's mother.



NURSE works for the Capulets. She has always looked after Juliet.



TYBALT is Lord Capulet's nephew. He likes to fight.



PARIS is a friend of the Prince and an important man. He wants to marry Juliet.



PRINCE ESCALUS is the Prince of Verona.



FRIAR LAURENCE is a church man. He also makes medicines.

MERCUTIO is Romeo's friend.

THE APOTHECARY makes and sells medicines and poisons.

## Shakespeare's language

Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* in 1594-5 in the time of Queen Elizabeth I. His language is very beautiful and clever, but it is difficult to understand now. It is different from the English that people speak today.

This book uses today's English to tell the story of the teenage lovers. You can read some of Shakespeare's own words in this book too. In the **red boxes**, you will find some of the most famous lines from *Romeo and Juliet*, exactly as Shakespeare wrote them.

In Shakespeare's time, people called an important woman 'my lady'. They called an important man 'my lord'. When they spoke to a man of the church, like Friar Laurence, they called him 'Father'.

## Acting the play

You can read *Romeo and Juliet* to yourself. It is a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. But Shakespeare wrote it as a play for actors and for people to watch. So it works better if you read it with a group of people. And it works best of all if you act it with a group of people.

If you are reading it alone, try to listen to the audio CD while you read. Different actors read the parts. You can hear how a person is feeling from their voice.

If you are in a group of people, read a different part each. Show how you are feeling when you say the words.

It is fun to act *Romeo and Juliet*. There are fights, dances and scenes with lots of people. If you are acting the play, you need swords, masks, a knife and a bottle of poison.

## Character list

Romeo  
Lord Montague  
Lady Montague  
Benvolio  
Balthasar, Romeo's servant

Juliet  
Lord Capulet  
Lady Capulet  
Tybalt  
Nurse  
Peter, Lord Capulet's servant

Prince Escalus  
Mercutio  
Paris  
Paris's servant

Friar Laurence  
Friar John  
The Apothecary

Officers (1-2)  
Servants (4-5)

# ROMEO & JULIET

## PROLOGUE

Our story takes place in Verona, in Italy. Escalus is the Prince of the city.

There are two important families in Verona – the Montagues and the Capulets. For hundreds of years the Montagues have hated the Capulets and the Capulets have hated the Montagues. When a Montague meets a Capulet in the town, they fight. There is always blood on the streets of this beautiful Italian city.

And then a Montague boy and a Capulet girl fall in love. Can they bring the families together? Can their love end the fighting?

This is their story.

## ACT ONE

### Act One ♦ Scene One

*The year is 1526. It is autumn in Verona. There is a fight in the street. Two Capulet servants are fighting two Montague servants. Benvolio takes out his sword and runs between them.*

**BENVOLIO** Stop fighting! Put your swords down!

*Tybalt arrives.*

**TYBALT** Benvolio! It is time to die!

**BENVOLIO** I am trying to keep the peace, Tybalt! I am trying to stop them.

**TYBALT** Peace? I hate the word 'peace'. I hate all Montagues and I hate you!

*Tybalt points his sword at Benvolio and they fight. The other men join in again. Lord Montague arrives and he joins in too.*

**LORD MONTAGUE** Tybalt! I am here too. Fight me!

*Lord and Lady Capulet arrive.*

**LORD CAPULET** Bring me my sword.

*Lady Capulet takes his arm.*

**LADY CAPULET** Don't be stupid. The Prince will be angry.

**LORD CAPULET** Montague is here and he's fighting. Get me a sword!

*A servant gives a sword to Lord Capulet. He tries to join the fight. Lady Capulet tries to stop him. The Prince of Verona arrives on his horse.*

**PRINCE ESCALUS** Men! Dogs! Stop! Put down your swords!

*The fighting stops.*

**PRINCE ESCALUS** Listen to me. I am very angry. Capulet and Montague, your families are always fighting in our streets. This is the last time I will do nothing. Next time, you will pay with your lives. I want peace in Verona. Capulet, come with me now. Montague, I will speak to you later. And now, you others, if you love life, go home!

*The Prince leaves and the Capulets follow him.*

LADY MONTAGUE Who started this fight?  
LORD MONTAGUE Benvolio, were you here when it began?  
BENVOLIO No, my lord. When I arrived, the servants were fighting. I wanted to stop them, but then Tybalt joined in. Tybalt is always angry and he tried to kill me. And then the Prince arrived.  
LADY MONTAGUE I am happy that Romeo is not part of this. Do you know where he is?  
BENVOLIO I saw your son early this morning, my lady. He was walking near the woods, looking sad.  
LORD MONTAGUE He often walks there at night. Then he shuts himself in his room all day.  
BENVOLIO What's wrong with him?  
LADY MONTAGUE He won't tell us.  
BENVOLIO Look, here he comes. Perhaps he'll tell me.  
LORD MONTAGUE Come, my lady, let's leave Benvolio with Romeo.

*Romeo arrives. Lord and Lady Montague go home.*

BENVOLIO Good morning, cousin Romeo.  
ROMEO Is it still morning? The sad hours pass so slowly.  
BENVOLIO Why are you sad? Are you in love?  
ROMEO I *am* in love.  
BENVOLIO Who with?  
ROMEO A woman.  
BENVOLIO I guessed that.  
ROMEO A woman ... who doesn't love me. Her name is Rosaline.  
BENVOLIO Rosaline! But she's a Capulet!  
ROMEO I know.  
BENVOLIO You must forget her.  
ROMEO How can I forget her?  
BENVOLIO Verona is full of beautiful women.

ROMEO When I look at other women, I only see that Rosaline is more beautiful than them.  
BENVOLIO I'll teach you to forget, you'll see!

## Act One ♦ Scene Two

*Inside the Capulet house, Lord Capulet is talking to Paris.*

PARIS So, my lord, what is your answer? Will you allow Juliet to be my wife?  
LORD CAPULET She is only thirteen. You must wait, Paris. Perhaps when she is fifteen.  
PARIS Some girls are already mothers at thirteen.  
LORD CAPULET And they are old women when they are twenty. Juliet is my only child. She carries all my hopes for the future. You can talk to her and try to win her heart, Paris. But she will decide. Tonight we're having a big party. I hope you will come, Paris.

*He calls his servant, Peter.*

