

Romeo and Juliet



A Star-crossed Romance




A Brief Introduction


- *Romeo and Juliet* was written by Shakespeare in 1594 or 1595.
- *Romeo and Juliet* was an experimental stage piece, featuring several radical departures from long-standing conventions.
- The themes of the play include the antithesis between love and hate, the use of a light/dark polarity, the use of time, and the use of Fate in the dreams, omens and forebodings that foreshadow the play's tragic conclusion.





A Very Brief Plot Summary

- Act I – Shakespeare establishes an on-going feud between two families, the Montagues and Capulets.
- Juliet's father decides that even though Juliet is only 13 it is time to find her a husband.
- Romeo (a Montague) and Juliet (A Capulet) meet and fall in love.

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- Act II – One of the Capulets challenges Romeo to a duel. Romeo's friends fear for his safety.
 - Friar Laurence conspires with Romeo to arrange a secret marriage.
 - By the end of Act II, Romeo and Juliet are married.

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- Act III – The duel between Romeo and Tybalt takes place after all, and Romeo kills Tybalt.
 - The Prince spares Romeo's life, but banishes him from Verona.
 - Juliet's father announces that she shall wed Paris in 3 days.
 - Juliet makes plans to seek the advice of Friar Laurence where unbeknownst to her Romeo is hiding.

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- Act IV -- Juliet threatens to commit suicide rather than marry Paris.
 - Friar Laurence convinces her to fake her death in order to be with Romeo.
 - Juliet follows the Friar's plan, and her corpselike body is discovered by her nurse.

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- Act V – Romeo receives word that Juliet is dead.
 - He buys a fast-acting poison and travels to Juliet's tomb so that he may die beside her.
 - Paris is also at the tomb. He and Romeo fight, and Paris is killed.
 - Romeo drinks the poison. Juliet awakens and stabs herself to death with Romeo's dagger.
 - The feuding families end their feud and erect golden statues to the lovers.