

Romeo and Juliet

by William Shakespeare



Romeo and Juliet, one of William Shakespeare's most famous tragedies, tells the story of two young lovers whose relationship unfolds against the backdrop of a bitter feud between their families, the Montagues and the Capulets. Set in Verona, the play traces the intense and rapid development of Romeo and Juliet's love, from their first meeting to their secret marriage and, ultimately, their tragic fate.

The drama explores the conflict between individual desire and social obligation, as love struggles to survive in a world governed by hatred, honor, and violence. Impulsive actions, misunderstandings, and the pressure of family loyalty drive the lovers toward catastrophe, highlighting how private emotions are crushed by public conflict. Youthful passion is contrasted with the rigid values of the older generation, revealing the destructive consequences of inherited enmity.

Through its lyrical language and powerful emotional force, Romeo and Juliet presents love as both transformative and fatal. The play remains timeless in its portrayal of passion, fate, and the tragic cost of intolerance, offering a poignant meditation on how love can flourish – and perish – under the shadow of social division.

CONTENTS

ACT I	7
PROLOGUE	7
SCENE I. Verona. A public place	7
SCENE II. A street	24
SCENE III. A room in Capulet's house	31
SCENE IV. A street	37
SCENE V. A hall in Capulet's house	44
ACT II	55
PROLOGUE	55
SCENE I. A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard	56
SCENE II. Capulet's orchard	58
SCENE III. Friar Laurence's cell	70
SCENE IV. A street	75
SCENE V. Capulet's orchard	90
SCENE VI. Friar Laurence's cell	95
ACT III	98
SCENE I. A public place	98
SCENE II. Capulet's orchard	111
SCENE III. Friar Laurence's cell	119
SCENE IV. A room in Capulet's house	129
SCENE V. Capulet's orchard	131

ACT IV	147
SCENE I. Friar Laurence's cell	147
SCENE II. Hall in Capulet's house	154
SCENE III. Juliet's chamber	158
SCENE IV. Hall in Capulet's house	161
SCENE V. Juliet's chamber	164
ACT V	174
SCENE I. Mantua. A street	174
SCENE II. Friar Laurence's cell	179
SCENE III. A churchyard; in it a tomb belonging to the Capulets	181

ACT I
PROLOGUE

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whole misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

SCENE I. Verona. A public place

*Enter SAMPSON and GREGORY, of the house
of Capulet, armed with swords and bucklers*

SAMPSON

Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.

GREGORY

No, for then we should be colliers.

SAMPSON

I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

GREGORY

Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.

SAMPSON

I strike quickly, being moved.

GREGORY

But thou art not quickly moved to strike.

SAMPSON

A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

GREGORY

To move is to stir; and to be valiant is to stand:
therefore, if thou art moved, thou runn'st away.

SAMPSON

A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will
take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

GREGORY

That shows thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes
to the wall.

SAMPSON

True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall: therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

GREGORY

The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

SAMPSON

'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids, and cut off their heads.

GREGORY

The heads of the maids?

SAMPSON

Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

GREGORY

They must take it in sense that feel it.

SAMPSON

Me they shall feel while I am able to stand: and 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

GREGORY

'Tis well thou art not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John. Draw thy tool! here comes two of the house of the Montagues.

SAMPSON

My naked weapon is out: quarrel, I will back thee.

GREGORY

How! turn thy back and run?

SAMPSON

Fear me not.

GREGORY

No, marry; I fear thee!

SAMPSON

Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

GREGORY

I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.

SAMPSON

Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.