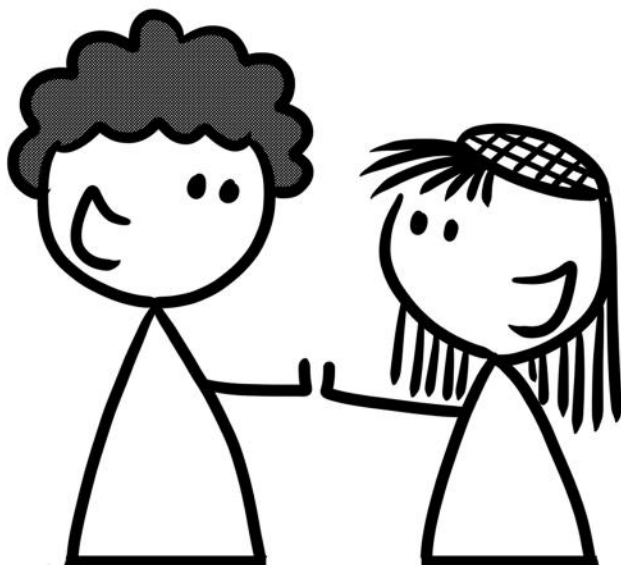


Romeo and Juliet

Romeo and Juliet Plot Summary



Two families living in Verona, the Montagues and the Capulets, have been fighting for years. Act I opens as the tension grows between the families, and a fight breaks out between servants from both households. Romeo, a Montague, then shows up as he talks with his friend, Benvolio, about his love for a lady, Rosalind. However, Romeo's love for Rosalind is completely forgotten as he spots Juliet at a party the Capulet's hold that night. In the meantime we meet Paris, a cousin of the Capulets who intends to marry Juliet and who already has her father's permission to do so.

Romeo and Juliet fall in love quickly, however, and that night they decide to marry. They decide keep the marriage a secret because of the fighting between their families. Juliet's Nurse and the Friar, Laurence, both help the young couple and arrange for a secret wedding the following day.

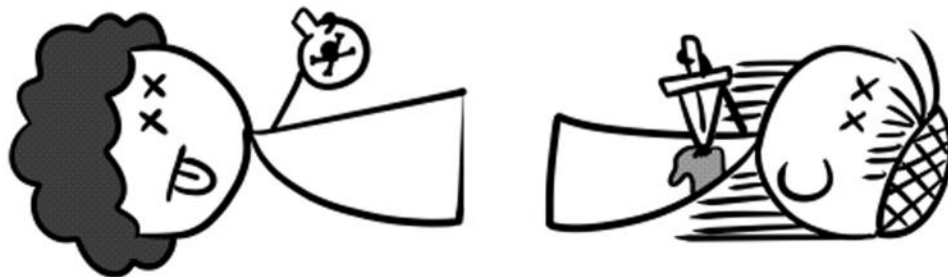
With the families still fighting, matters come to a head when Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, kills Mercutio, a friend of Romeo. Romeo then kills Tybalt in anger. Because of the murder, Prince Escalus banishes Romeo, effective immediately.

Romeo and Juliet

Still unaware of the wedding of Juliet and Romeo, the Capulets decide to move forward with Juliet's marriage to Paris the following Thursday. When Juliet finds out about the marriage, she protests, begging her father to not make her marry Paris. Her father is unsympathetic, however, since he does not know that Juliet is already a married woman. To stop this second marriage, Friar Laurence gives Juliet a sleeping potion, meant to make her 'appear like death' (4.1). The Friar tells Juliet that Romeo will know of the plan, and that the couple will be able to run away after she has been put into the Capulet family tomb. The potion works making Juliet's parents and Paris believe that Juliet has died, and they hold a funeral for Juliet.

Unfortunately, Romeo is fooled also, since the message from Friar Laurence never reached him. Believing Juliet dead, Romeo goes to the tomb and drinks poison to kill himself. Juliet wakes next to the poisoned Romeo and in her grief kills herself with his dagger.

With shared grief, Capulet and Montague end their feud.



Vocabulary

to come to a head (v) – to reach a high point of action

potion (n) – a liquid with magical, medical, or poisonous properties

to fool – to trick or deceive

tomb (n) – an underground room for burying the dead

poison (n) – a substance that can cause illness or death

grief (n) – intense sadness