

Romeo two families
so much so that
shakespeare's
historical play) for
every seaso...



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Romeo and Juliet, is a story of two young lovers, whose love was destined for destruction.

They did not imagine that their love would lead to the tragedies that it did. These two young people did nothing wrong except fall in love. Three aspects of their destruction included the feud between the two families, the nurse and her betrayal of Juliet and the most important aspect of all, fate. The feud between the two families was one factor that contributed to the love of Romeo and Juliet being destined for destruction." From ancient grudge break to new mutiny".(Romeo & Juliet, Prologue, pg. 2 l. 3)The two families, Montagues and Capulets, had many problems.

' witty') connects the piece with Love's Labour's Lost - a play that also appeared in an ' official' edition in 1599. The play is one of Shakespeare's most ambitious and unambiguous attempts to join the immortals, and as such seems at first blush very different from the demythologising of Love's Labour's Lost and the open-endedness of the Dream. It is introduced by a chorus, and wrapped up by a judgemental speech from a duke. And it sets out to transform its youthful lovers into mythical, 'star-crossed' figures, fit to rank with all the celebrated pairs of tragic lovers throughout literary history. In particular, Shakespeare was seeking to join the company of English practitioners in this mode, most notably Chaucer, whose Troilus and Criseyde was then regarded as the finest poem yet written in the language, and Sidney, whose tragicomic Astrophil and Stella was beginning to rival the celebrity of Chaucer's creation. But Shakespeare was to take a love tragedy and put it on a public stage; and it was to be a story that dealt not with lofty figures from the distant past or ancient epic, but with two adolescents in a

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recognisably modern city-state. Like Sidney's sequence, and like the two brief comedies of these years, *Romeo and Juliet* hovers tantalisingly between fiction and actuality - in keeping with classical prescriptions, it is a tragedy based on a story that was believed to be true.

In its ultimate Italian source, a novel by Masuccio Salernitano (published in 1576), the story of the lovers, Mariotto and Gianozza, is said to have taken place during the author's lifetime. When Luigi da Porta published his version in 1530, with the names changed to Romeo and Giulietta, and their families identified as the Montecchi and Capelletti, he claimed that his tale was verifiable fact (although the historical Capelletti came from Cremona, and da Porta's coupling of them was based on a very literal reading of a line in Dante). Corte, in his history of Verona (1594) accepted da Porta's word and told the story as an illustration of the civil dissent of the time. To this day, tourists to Verona are directed to the major sites featured in the tragic story.

Bibliography: