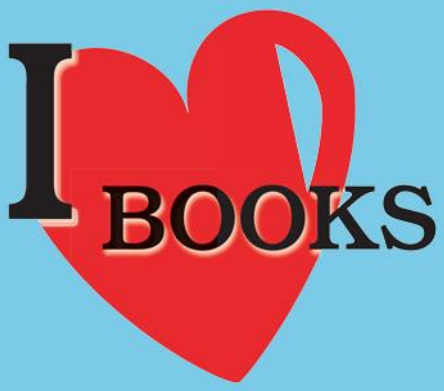


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an extract from

Stories from Shakespeare

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Romeo and Juliet is often seen as a mix of both comedy and tragedy. It is set in the Italian town of Verona where two families – the Montagues and the Capulets – are at war.

Romeo and Juliet

Adapted by Anna Claybourne
Illustrated by Jana Costa

The Characters

Old Montague, head of the Montague family. Adores his son Romeo.





Count Paris, a nobleman. Engaged to Juliet.

Prince Escalus, ruler of Verona. Annoyed with the constant quarrels between local families.



Romeo Montague, heir to the Montague family. Falls in love with Juliet at first sight.



Benvolio, Romeo's cousin. Friends with Romeo and Mercutio; a peacemaker.

Mercutio, good friend of Romeo and Benvolio. Flamboyant and quick-witted.



Friar Laurence, an old monk. Tries to help the young couple.



Lady Capulet, Juliet's mother. Wants her to marry Count Paris.

Friar John, Friar Laurence's friend.

Juliet's nurse. Has cared for Juliet since she was a baby.







Old Capulet, head of the Capulet family. A strict father.

Tybalt, Juliet's cousin. Hot-headed and argumentative.

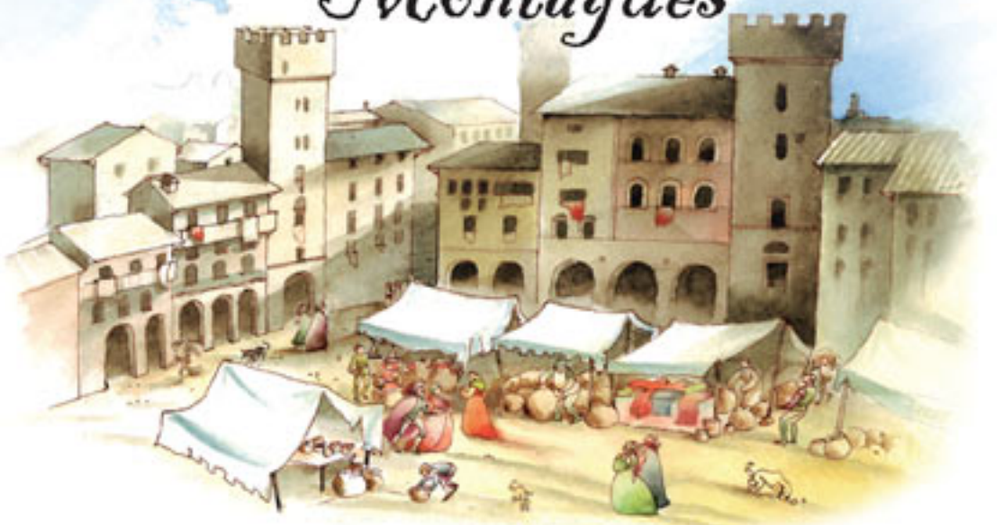
Juliet Capulet. Just 13 years old when the story begins.

Contents

Chapter 1	Capulets and Montagues	75
Chapter 2	Falling in love	81
Chapter 3	A secret wedding	91
Chapter 4	Escape to Mantua	101
Chapter 5	The magic potion	110
Chapter 6	Romeo returns	118

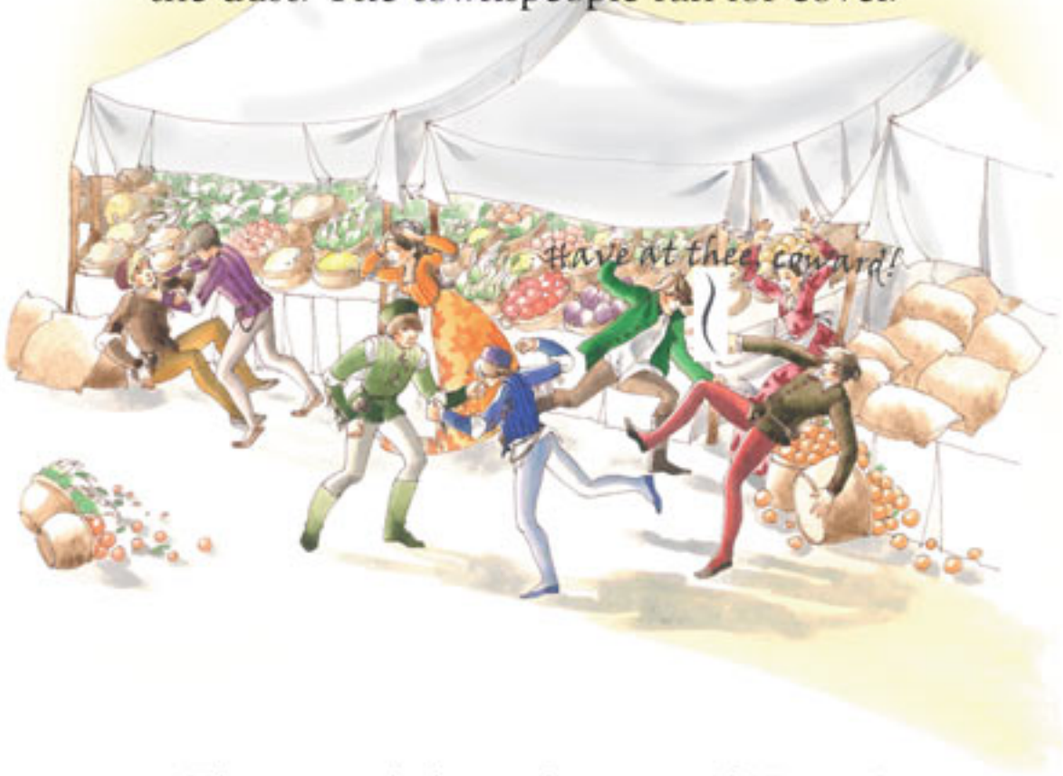
Chapter 1

Capulets and Montagues



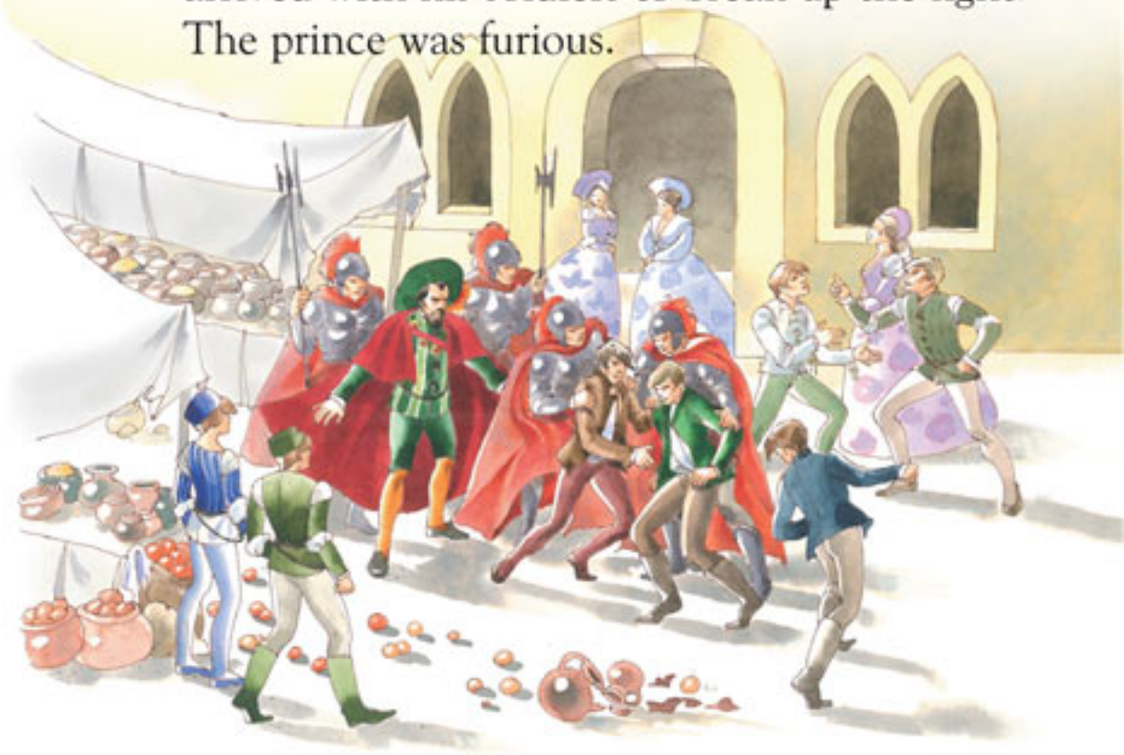
It was a warm summer's afternoon in the pretty town of Verona. People were busy shopping and chatting in the sunshine when suddenly...

Two gangs of young men tore across the market square, fighting, kicking and rolling in the dust. The townspeople ran for cover.



The gangs belonged to two of Verona's richest families – the Capulets and the Montagues. The families were sworn enemies, and they were always fighting.

In minutes, Verona's ruler Prince Escalus arrived with his soldiers to break up the fight. The prince was furious.



"I've had enough of this feud!" he raged. "It's got to stop. From now on, anyone caught fighting will be put to death!"