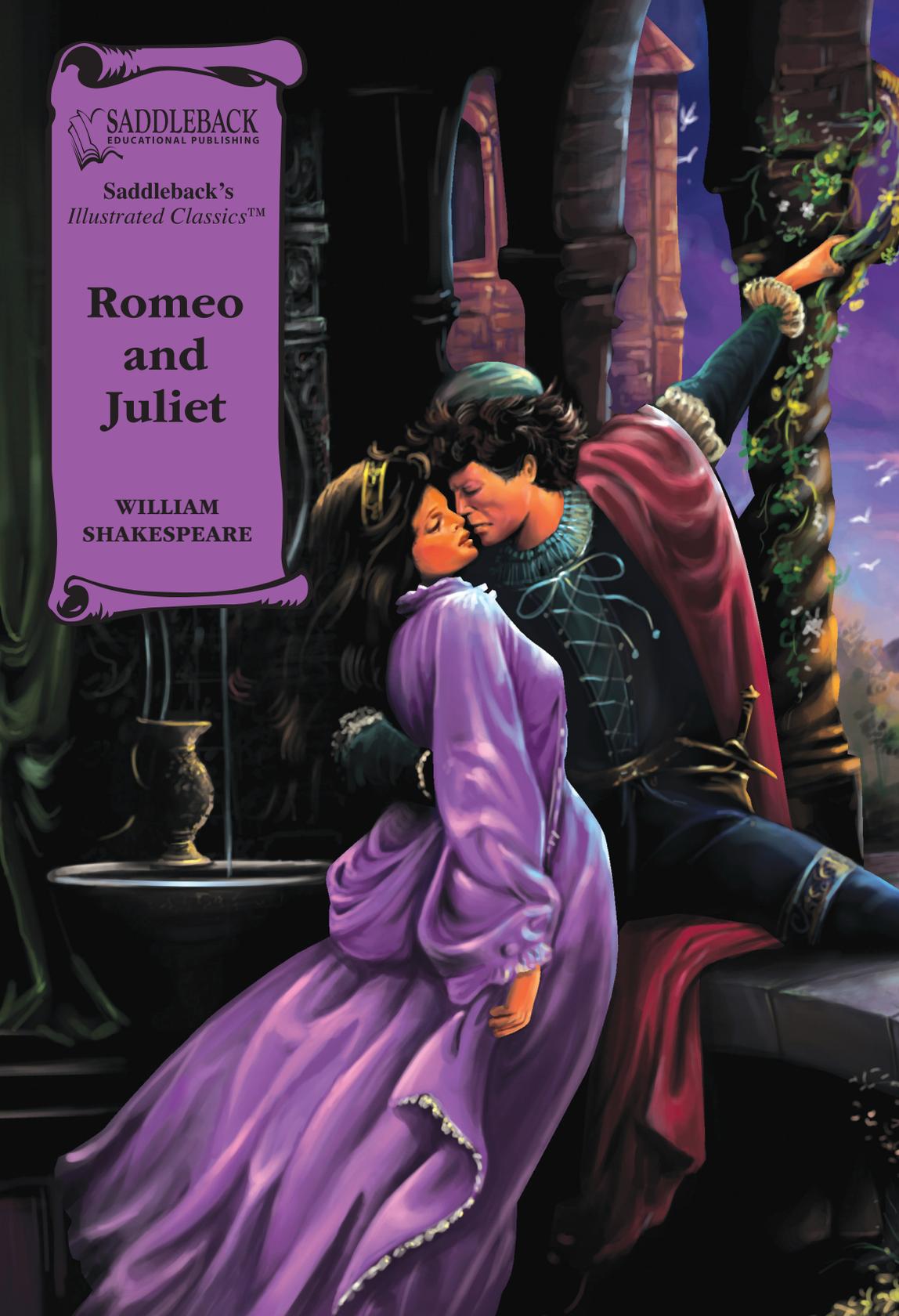




Saddleback's
Illustrated Classics™

Romeo and Juliet

WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE





William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, in Stratford-on-Avon, England, the third child of John Shakespeare, a well-to-do merchant, and Mary Arden, his wife. Young William probably attended the Stratford grammar school, where he learned English, Greek, and a great deal of Latin. Historians aren't sure of the exact date of Shakespeare's birth.

In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. By 1583 the couple had a daughter, Susanna, and two years later the twins, Hamnet and Judith. Somewhere between 1585 and 1592 Shakespeare went to London, where he became first an actor and then a playwright. His acting company, *The King's Men*, appeared most often in the *Globe* theater, a part of which Shakespeare himself owned.

In all, Shakespeare is believed to have written thirty-seven plays, several nondramatic poems, and a number of sonnets. In 1611 when he left the active life of the theater, he returned to Stratford and became a country gentleman, living in the second-largest house in town. For five years he lived a quiet life. Then, on April 23, 1616, William Shakespeare died and was buried in Trinity Church in Stratford. From his own time to the present, Shakespeare is considered one of the greatest writers of the English-speaking world.





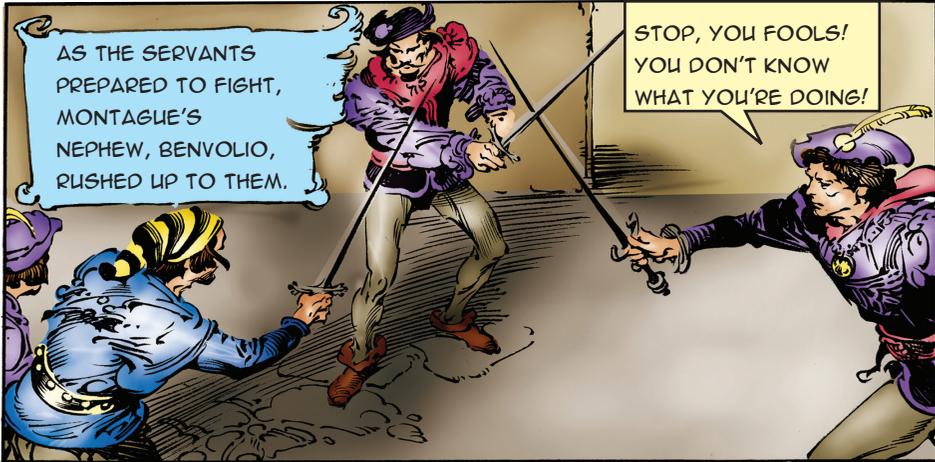
MANY YEARS AGO IN VERONA, ITALY, THERE LIVED TWO FAMILIES WHO HATED ONE ANOTHER. THE MONTAGUES AND THE CAPULETS HAD BEEN CARRYING ON A FEUD FOR AS LONG AS THEY COULD REMEMBER.

IF THOSE MONTAGUES SHOULD COME BY, I'LL STRIKE BEFORE THEY CAN RUN AWAY!

THEN TAKE OUT YOUR SWORD, FOR TWO OF THEM ARE COMING NOW.

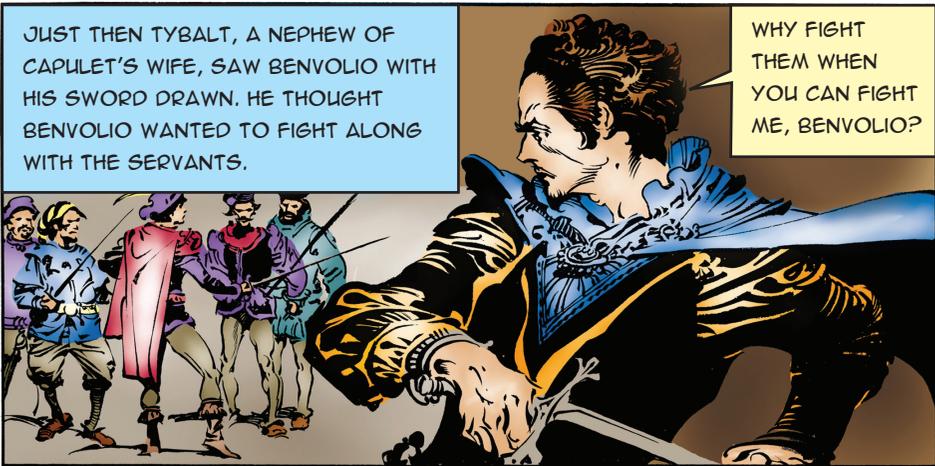
SAMPSON AND GREGORY WERE SERVANTS OF THE CAPULETS. THEY WERE JUST AS READY TO FIGHT THE MONTAGUES AS THEIR MASTERS WERE.





AS THE SERVANTS PREPARED TO FIGHT, MONTAGUE'S NEPHEW, BENVOLIO, RUSHED UP TO THEM.

STOP, YOU FOOLS! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!



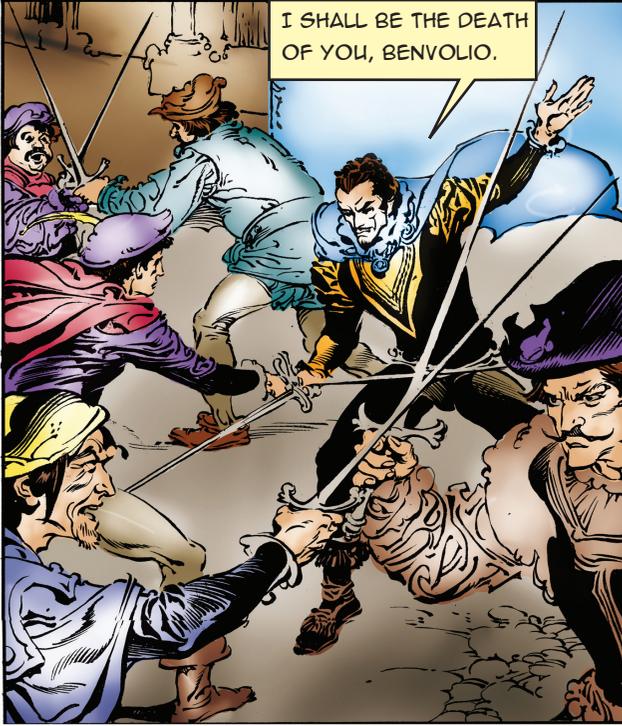
JUST THEN TYBALT, A NEPHEW OF CAPULET'S WIFE, SAW BENVOLIO WITH HIS SWORD DRAWN. HE THOUGHT BENVOLIO WANTED TO FIGHT ALONG WITH THE SERVANTS.

WHY FIGHT THEM WHEN YOU CAN FIGHT ME, BENVOLIO?



I AM TRYING TO KEEP PEACE, TYBALT. IF YOU MUST USE YOUR SWORD, HELP ME TO SEPARATE THESE SERVANTS.

I DO NOT LIKE THE WORD PEACE. I HATE YOU AND ALL THE OTHER MONTAGUES. FIGHT ME, I SAY!

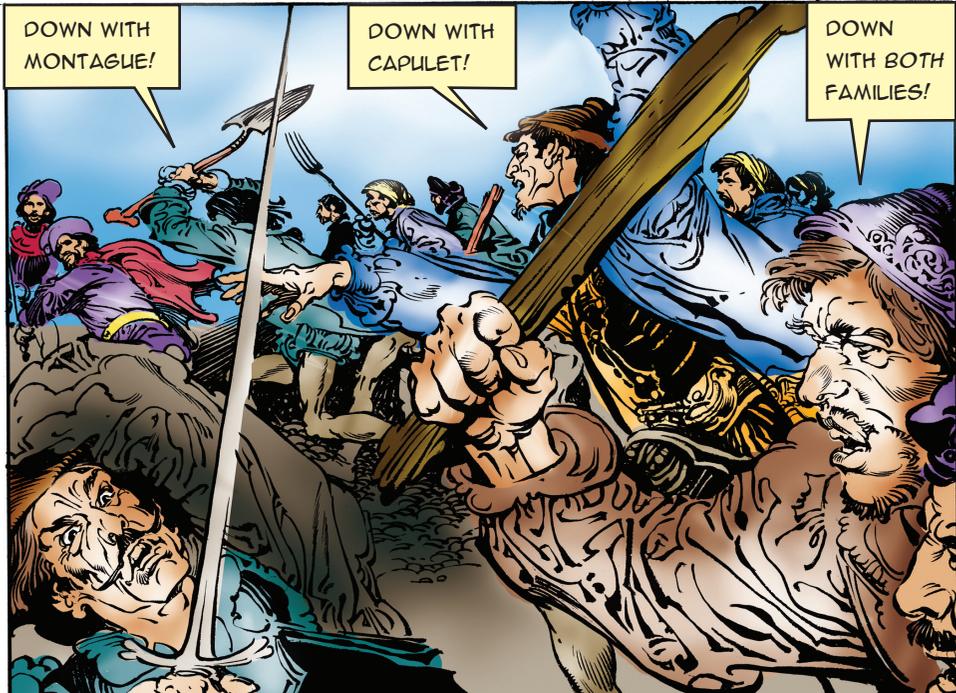


I SHALL BE THE DEATH OF YOU, BENVOLIO.

MANY GOOD CITIZENS OF VERONA WERE TIRED OF THE LONG FELD. THEY RUSHED UP TO THE FIGHTING MEN.



STOP THEM, CITIZENS! STRIKE! BEAT THEM DOWN!



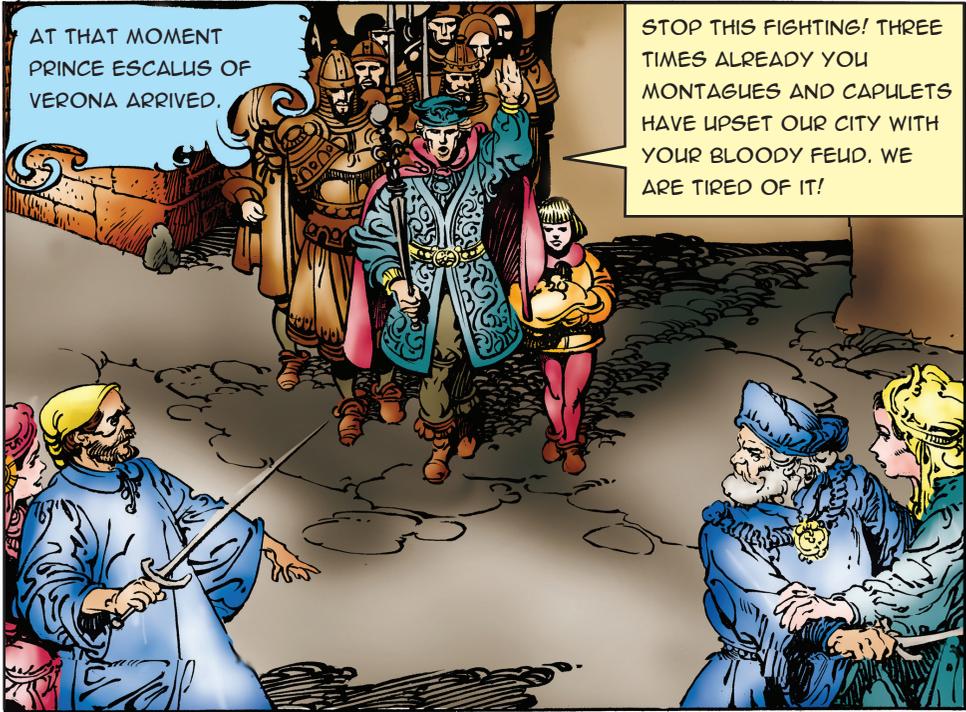
DOWN WITH MONTAGUE!

DOWN WITH CAPULET!

DOWN WITH BOTH FAMILIES!

HEARING THE NOISE, OLD CAPULET AND LORD MONTAGUE CAME OUT OF THEIR HOUSES TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING.





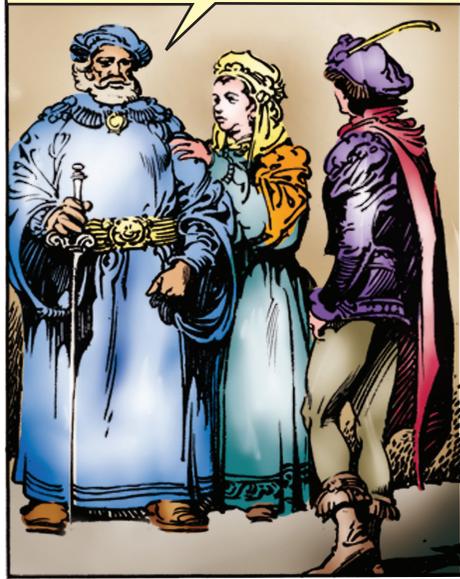
WITH THIS, THE PRINCE LEFT AND THE PEOPLE WENT BACK TO THEIR HOMES.

BY THE WAY, BENVOLIO, HAVE YOU SEEN MY SON ROMEO TODAY? I AM GLAD HE WAS NOT IN THIS FIGHT.



I SAW HIM WALKING THIS MORNING, LADY MONTAGUE. HE WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE.

HE HAS BEEN DOING THAT A LOT LATELY, DEAR WIFE. HE STAYS UP ALL NIGHT LONG. AND DURING THE DAY HE LOCKS HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM.

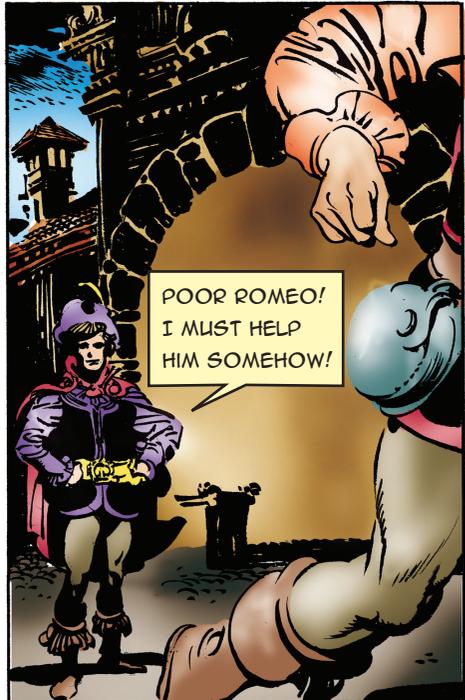


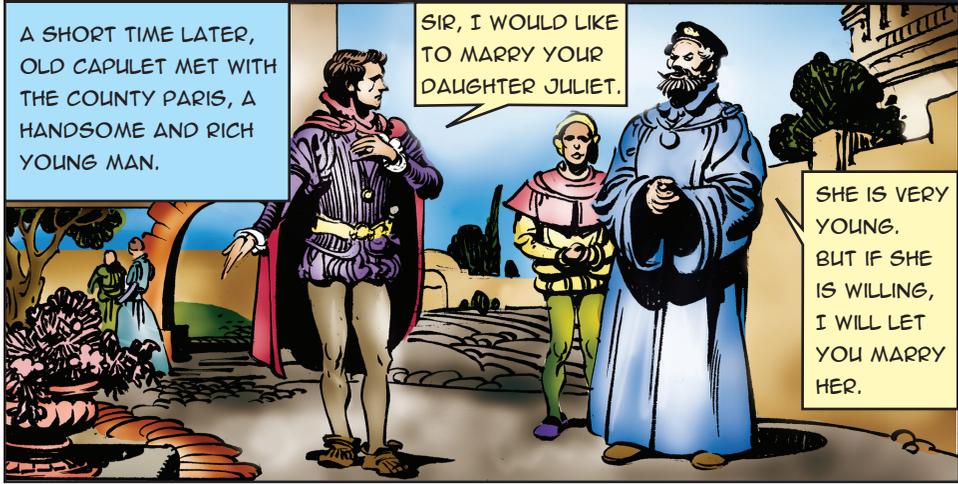
AS THE SPOKE, ROMEO CAME DOWN THE STREET. BENVOLIO WENT ALONE TO TALK WITH HIM.



GOOD MORNING, COUSIN. WHAT IS BOTHERING YOU?

OH, BENVOLIO, I AM IN LOVE!





A SHORT TIME LATER, OLD CAPULET MET WITH THE COUNTY PARIS, A HANDSOME AND RICH YOUNG MAN.

SIR, I WOULD LIKE TO MARRY YOUR DAUGHTER JULIET.

SHE IS VERY YOUNG. BUT IF SHE IS WILLING, I WILL LET YOU MARRY HER.



COME TO MY FEAST TONIGHT. YOU MAY SEE SOME OTHER LADY MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN JULIET.

I WILL COME, SIR.



OLD CAPULET CALLED HIS SERVANT AND GAVE HIM A LIST OF NAMES.

GO AND INVITE ALL THE PEOPLE ON THIS LIST TO MY HOME TONIGHT.