

Who's who in this fatal game of love?

Montagues

Romeo: Our main male protagonist, about 16. Falls in love easily, rejects his family for love of Juliet, hot-headed, kills Tybalt (Juliet's cousin), marries young and dies tragically.

Lord Montague and Lady Montague: father and mother to Romeo, maintains the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues. Lady M shows maternal instinct and caring for Romeo – she dies heartbroken at the end.

Mercutio: A family member of the Prince, and Romeo's best friend.

Benvolio: Montague's nephew, Romeo's cousin and thoughtful friend, he makes a genuine effort to defuse violent scenes in public places, though Mercutio accuses him of having a nasty temper in private. He spends most of the play trying to help Romeo get his mind off Rosaline, even after Romeo has fallen in love with Juliet.

Balthasar: Romeo's dedicated servant, who brings Romeo the news of Juliet's death, unaware that her death is a ruse.

Abram: Montague's servant, who fights with Sampson and Gregory in the first scene of the play.

Capulets

Juliet: Our main female protagonist, she is 13 years old. She falls in love quickly and completely, rejects the rules of her family and patriarchy, considered in some of her actions, impulsive when emotional, marries young and dies tragically.

The Nurse: Juliet's companion and confidante, like a mother to Juliet, unquestioningly helps Juliet marry Romeo, advisor and friend.

Lord Capulet: Juliet's father, arranges her marriage to Paris, no consultation with Juliet on this, disowns her and is rude and angry towards her when she disagrees, epitomises the patriarchal society, rules his home with an iron fist, makes all the important decisions, agrees to let old quarrels die after the death of Juliet

Lady Capulet: Juliet's mother, distant from Juliet, non-maternal, very young (implies she was 13 herself when she had Juliet – which means she is only 26 in the play!), does as Lord C tells her, could be considered a victim of the patriarchal society

Tybalt: Juliet's cousin, Prince of 'Cats'. Leader of the Capulet gang, vain, fashionable, supremely aware of courtesy and the lack of it, he becomes

aggressive, violent, and quick to draw his sword when he feels his pride has been injured. Once drawn, his sword is something to be feared. He hates Montagues.

Paris: A kinsman of the Prince, and the suitor of Juliet most preferred by Capulet. Once Capulet has promised him he can marry Juliet, he behaves very presumptuous toward Juliet, acting as if they are already married.

Peter: A Capulet servant who invites guests to Capulet's feast and escorts the Nurse to meet with Romeo.

Rosaline: The woman with whom Romeo is infatuated at the beginning of the play. Rosaline never appears onstage, but it is said by other characters that she is very beautiful and has sworn to live a life of chastity.

Sampson & Gregory: Two servants of the house of Capulet, who, like their master, hate the Montagues. At the outset of the play, they successfully provoke some Montague men into a fight.

Peter: A Capulet servant who invites guests to Capulet's feast and escorts the Nurse to meet with Romeo.

Characters Non-Affiliated to a family

Friar Laurence: Priest who secretly marries Romeo and Juliet in hopes that the union might eventually bring peace to Verona.

Paris: A kinsman of the Prince, and the suitor of Juliet most preferred by Capulet. Once Capulet has promised him he can marry Juliet, he behaves very presumptuous toward Juliet, acting as if they are already married.

Prince Escalus: The Prince of Verona. A kinsman of Mercutio and Paris. As the seat of political power in Verona, he is concerned about maintaining the public peace at all costs.