



## WHAT'S THE Story?

THE WISHBONE-ESQUE  
BOOK CLUB YOU NEVER  
KNEW YOU WANTED

### An Introduction to Romeo & Juliet

One of the most tragic stories ever told, *Romeo and Juliet* is also arguably Shakespeare's best-known play. The story follows Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet, two teenagers, as they have a chance meeting, fall in love, and then kill themselves because their warring families will never let them be together. All happening over the course of four days.

*Romeo and Juliet* is itself an adaptation of a poem written by Arthur Brooke, which in turn was a translation from an Italian story by Matteo Bandello. However, Shakespeare's version of the tale is by far the most famous, and the one that has inspired thousands of other works. Despite the tragedy of the story, the romance has impacted audiences for centuries. It was one of Shakespeare's most popular plays in his own lifetime and is still one of his best known and most frequently performed works. The popularity of *Romeo and Juliet* has also influenced modern filmmakers, composers, playwrights, and authors who keep offering their own spin on the star-crossed lovers trope.

Today, there is a wide array of retellings of the famous tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. The acclaimed musical *West Side Story*, for example, moves the characters from 1500's Italy to 1950's New York against the backdrop of warring street gangs and leans into all the death featured in the original play. In contrast, there are also adaptations like *The Spruces and the Pines*, a fluffy Hallmark Christmas movie where the lovers come from rival Christmas tree farms. Not all versions of the tale end as tragically as Shakespeare's original, but they all have the common trait of two lovers who have some sort of outside conflict keeping them apart. Borrowing this single troupe from Shakespeare leaves creators a lot of freedom with their retellings, and this month we will explore some of the most interesting takes on the tale. Check out some of our recommendations to get started.

### What is a Retelling?

Whenever an existing story inspires a movie, book, television show, video game, or play, it goes through a process called adaptation. Retellings adapt stories by changing elements to fit a new context. For example, a retelling may change its source material to fit a new type of medium, a different genre, or a new era. Despite changes, retellings inherently carry story elements from the source material.

Retellings and adaptations have been around as long as stories have been told. Many classic myths and fables had hundreds of versions before being put into print. Retellings are part of our collective history, existing in every culture, medium, and time period.

The What's The Story Book Club seeks to understand how classic stories influence our past and continue to expand how we think, feel, and experience the world through adaptations and retellings.

Each month we choose a well-known myth, fairy tale, or piece of literature. We discuss the original, or best-known versions of the story. Then you choose a retelling that you wish to experience. Your choice can be any genre or medium, as long as the story relates to that month's source material.

As you read or watch your retelling, take note of what elements you recognize from the original story, what elements are changed, and anything you find interesting about the adaptation. We will discuss each version that our group chose when we meet again.



PhoenixPublicLibrary AGAVE LIBRARY 23550 N 36TH AVE 85310

## YA Novels

Starry Eyes by Jenn Bennett  
Noughts & Crosses by Malorie Blackman (ebook)  
Compulsion by Martina Boone  
Prince of Shadows by Rachel Caine  
American Panda by Gloria Chao  
Between You, Me, and the Honeybees by Amelia Coombs  
Roman + Jewel by Dana Davis  
Verona Comics by Jennifer Dugan  
Until Death Do Us Part by Susan Harris  
Bright Smoke, Cold Fire by Rosamund Hodge  
A Pho Love Story by Loan Le  
Street Love by Walter Dean Myers  
Want by Cindy Pon  
This Savage Song by Vicotria Schwab  
Romeo, Juliet & Jim by Larry Schwartz  
That Way Madness Lies by Various Authors

## Adult Fiction

Boss by Tracy Brown  
Juliet by Anne Fortier  
These Violent Delights by Chloe Gong  
Adoring Addie by Leslie Gould  
The Sharp Hook of Love by Sherry Jones  
Like No Other by Una LaMarche (ebook)  
Ronit & Jamil by Pamela L. Laskin  
Juliet's Nurse by Lois Leveen  
Romeo and/or Juliet : a chooseable-path adventure by Ryan North  
When You Were Mine by Rebecca Serle (ebook)

## Kids Books

Romeosaurus and Juliet Rex by Mo O'Hara  
Romeow & Drooliet by Nina Laden

## Other Media

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet : a graphic novel by Hernán Carreras

The most excellent and lamentable tragedy of Romeo & Juliet by Gareth Hinds

## Movies

Dakan  
Down Argentine Way  
Five Feet Apart  
Gnomeo & Juliet  
Love is All There is (evideo)  
Love is Thicker Than Water (evideo)  
The Magical Legend of the Leprechauns  
Romeo and Juliet -- many versions  
Romeo & Juliet: sealed with a kiss (evideo)  
Romeo Must Die  
Shakespeare in Love  
The Spruces and the Pines (evideo)  
Warm Bodies  
West Side Story

## Awesome things that Phoenix Public Library doesn't own

Romiette and Julio by Sharon M. Draper  
Romeo's Ex by Lisa Fiedler  
Romero and Juliet: the Tragic Tale of Love and Zombies by Warren Fielding  
Romeo and Juliet vs. Zombies by Koji Sakai  
Prince of Cats by Ronald Wimberly  
Yolo Juliet by Brett Wright  
Romeo and Juliet Ballet (found on youtube and other streaming platforms)  
Die in a Gunfight (Hulu streaming)

