

Romeo and Juliet-Tragedy/Comedy

Romeo and Juliet could have been a romantic comedy.

- A. The characters Romeo and Juliet are lovers who confront the barriers erected by their parents and society. This situation is typical of Shakespearean comedy. e.g. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- B. The plot develops by a series of accidents (chance elements) that could have produced a happy outcome.
- C. The bourgeois setting is customarily found in comedy rather than tragedy.,
 - 1. The Capulets and Montagues are not aristocrats like Paris, they are rich and "alike in dignity" (bourgeois)
 - 2. Juliet's father (Capulet) seeks social advancement, wishes to marry his daughter to Count Paris –an aristocrat and kinsman of the Prince of Verona.
- D. The unhappy outcome "results from the impetuosity of the lovers, the stubbornness of the parents, and sheer bad luck." (Saccio, 1999)