



Romiette and Julio

By Sharon M. Draper

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Star Crossed Lovers

When Romiette Cappelle meets Julio Montague, she feels as though she has met the soul mate who can rescue her from her recurring nightmare about fire and water. But like the Shakespearean characters whose names echo theirs, Romiette and Julio discover that not everyone approves of their budding romance. In their case, it is because Romiette is African-American and Julio is Hispanic, and the Devildogs, a dangerous local gang, violently oppose their interracial relationship. When the Devildogs threaten to teach them a lesson, Romiette and Julio come up with a risky plan to escape from the gang's fearsome shadow. But things go terribly awry, and the two find themselves caught up in a deadly reality more frightening than Romiette's nightmare -- and in a desperate struggle to avoid the tragic fate of Shakespeare's famous young lovers.

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Romiette and Julio By Sharon M. Draper Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #206141 in Books
- Brand: Simon Pulse
- Published on: 2001-05-01
- Released on: 2001-05-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.00" h x .90" w x 4.19" l, .40 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 320 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-10-A contemporary retelling of the Romeo and Juliet story with a happy, upbeat ending. Sixteen-year-old Julio Montague's parents have moved their family to Cincinnati, OH, in order to get their son out of his gang-ridden high school in Corpus Christi, TX. Romiette Cappelle, also 16, is the daughter of successful African-American parents and the granddaughter of college professors. When these two young people, both from proud heritages, begin a romance, they must deal not only with their parents' prejudices but also with the threats of a local gang called The Family. At times, Romiette and Julio effectively parallels and contemporizes the original story. The young couple meet, not at the Capulets' feast, but in an Internet chat room. Julio's friend, Ben Olsen (read Benvolio), who looks like a punk rocker, has an optimistic and irreverent attitude that balances Julio's passion and volatility. At other times, the allusions to the play are obvious and heavy-handed. Nonetheless, this novel is more than simply a carefully plotted teenage romance. Draper gives a realistic portrayal of the interactions among high school students as well as their relationships with their parents. The book also examines how gangs can gain power and take control. All of the characters have unique voices and the writing style shifts according to the action. *Romiette and Julio* would be a wonderful curriculum tie-in book, but it also stands alone as a first-rate novel about contemporary teens.

Jane Halsall, McHenry Public Library District, IL

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From [Booklist](#)

When Romiette Capelle, aka Afroqueen, and Julio Montague, aka Spanishlover, meet in an Internet chat room, neither of them has any idea they both go to the same Cincinnati high school. Afroqueen is from a prominent African American family; Spanishlover is Hispanic and the new kid in town. When Romiette and Julio meet in person, they know they are fated to be together. In keeping with their Shakespearean counterparts, they are thwarted in love: a local gang, the Devildogs, is set on keeping Romiette away from the "foreigner." The dialogue (and there's lots of it) is jarring and stilted, and Romiette's father and some peripheral adult characters are overdone. But Draper has created Julio's parents and Romiette's mother with sensitivity and has given readers a pair of intriguing, unusual protagonists with the sort of real thoughts and feelings that will make this interracial story satisfying despite its stylistic problems. *Holly Koelling*

From Kirkus Reviews

A tale of forbidden love with intentional references to Shakespeare's play, perhaps especially to its West Side Story incarnation, with a similar focus on issues of race and gangs. Julio Montague, a recent Texas transplant to Cincinnati, quickly falls for "Afroqueen" during cyber-chats on the Internet. He soon discovers his soulmate is African-American Romiette Cappelle, who coincidentally attends his high school. The two are destined to meet and fall in love, despite warnings from the local gang who strongly disapproves of their romance. After the two central players ignore several warnings, gun-wielding gang leaders kidnap them, bind them, and cast them adrift in a boat that is struck by lightning, nearly drowning them (and straining credibility). The parallels to Shakespeare's play are often self-conscious and belabored, drawn at odd moments in the story. Still, a straightforward, uncluttered narrative will hook readers into the well-paced plot and sympathetic characters; loose ends are tied more neatly than a package, prettying up the ending by putting a happily-ever-after spin on the lovers' fates. (Fiction. 12-14) -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tim Simmons:

The book with title Romiette and Julio contains a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. That book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world now. That is important to yo7u to learn how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you throughout new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book with your smart phone, so you can read it anywhere you want.

Patrick Pond:

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Charlotte Lee:

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