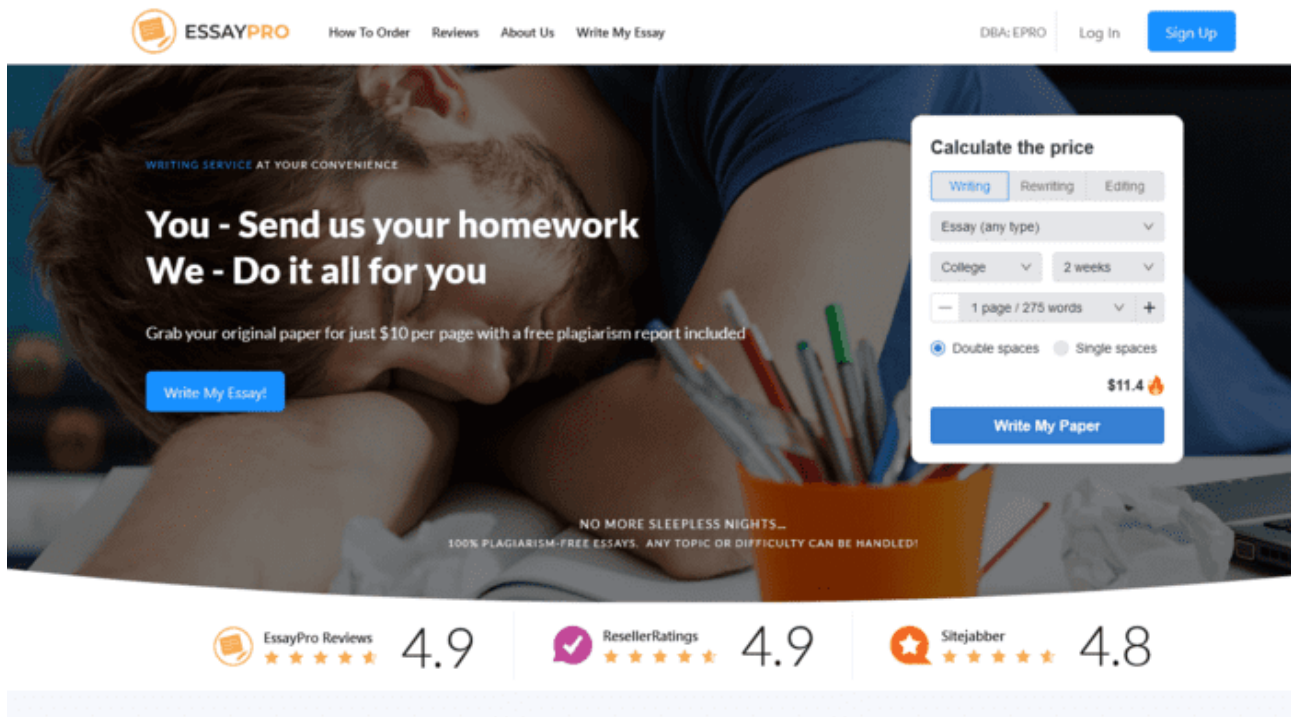


# Shakespeare's Use of Dramatic Irony In Romeo and Juliet

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## Shakespeare's Use of Dramatic Irony In Romeo and Juliet

I understand that the term, 'Dramatic irony' is the irony that occurs when a situation, or speech for instance, is fully understood by the audience but not by the characters in the play.

Shakespeare uses dramatic irony superbly throughout the play, because he leaves the audience in suspense and anticipation whilst leaving the theatre surrounded by tension. This is what I think makes the play a great tragedy because it makes us ask the question, "What if?" What if

Romeo hadn't been so hasty in love? What if he hadn't let his emotions (especially rage) control him?

In the prologue, the chorus announces, "A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life." The audience is quick to figure out that he means [Romeo and Juliet](#), but they wonder why Shakespeare has just declared the ending at the beginning of the play. I think this is because he is implying to the audience that fate has control over their lives and there is no way to interfere with what has been set for them. This also sets the scene and the audience can now see the play from a new perspective as what they know is revealed before them. What the audience know from the chorus now also plays with their emotions and reactions, as they know what will happen, but how? And when? This also causes more suspense and anticipation and lets them focus on less obvious parts of the play such as the language or actions of the characters.

Before the scenes I will be covering, Act 3 Scene 1 and Act 5 Scene III, we have seen a lot of conflict between the two houses, Romeo in 'love' with a lady named Rosaline whom we never see, and then...

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Friar Lawrence abandons the tomb, leaving her confused and disorientated looking for her husband who was supposed to be by her side, ready to run away from Verona and all their troubles.

The last thing to pass Romeo's lips were the words; "Thus with a kiss I die." This creates a very unnerving tension for the audience, as we know that Juliet has yet to find this out, when she is in the tomb with nothing but Romeo's "happy dagger" and watchmen approaching. Now we see the end of such a happy tale filled with romance, delicate and beautiful language, turn into such a tragic tale of hatred and ill fate. If only Romeo had stopped to think after the words, "O I am fortunes fool" had been uttered from his mouth, that they could have so much of a dramatically ironic affect on their fresh and promising lives.

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