

**ROMEO AND JULIET:
WITH INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES**

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Romeo and Juliet: With Introduction and Notes by William Shakespeare & K. Deighton

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & K. DEIGHTON

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SHAKESPEARE

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BY
K. DEIGHTON

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INTRODUCTION.

As to the date at which *Romeo and Juliet* was first Date of Play. written, and what its form then was, we have no certain information. Its first printed appearance is the Quarto of 1597, but that quarto was without doubt a pirated one. The second quarto, 1599, is described on the title-page as "newly corrected, augmented, and amended"; and this edition is our best authority for the play in its complete state, though it does not enable us to decide with certainty how far the alteration of form is due to revision by the poet, how far to correction and completion of the pirated quarto. Nor of course does it give us any help as to the date of composition. Internal evidence clearly points to two periods of work, the earlier being indicated by the abundance of rhyme and of forced conceits; and it is now pretty generally held that the play in its original form, or a substantial part of it, was written in 1591 or 1592, and received its final shape in 1596. If the Nurse's words in i. 3. 23 allude, as has been supposed, to the earthquake of 1580, we have the year 1591 as the date of that part of the play, or the year 1593, if the Nurse's miscalculation is to be harmonized with her statement of Juliet's age. It is, however, to be doubted whether any particular earthquake is alluded to.