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**Allusions to Romeo and Juliet in Pop Culture Songs**

*Many artists have been inspired by Shakespeare’s famous tragedy and alluded to Romeo and Juliet’s love in their songs. Sometimes, these artists only make brief mention of the play as a means of developing the song’s message, others weave references to the famous lovers into songs to a much more integral degree.*

*As you read the lyrical example of such an allusion below, consider how the artist has both alluded to Shakespeare’s original work and themes, but also transformed the story to develop a theme or plot unique to the song. Mark and the text of the lyrics and use the column to the right to annotate, playing close attention to* ***imagery, references to dialogue, plot, or themes in Shakespeare’s play, divergence from Shakespeare’s original story, and development of the characters and plot of the song itself.***

**“Romeo and Juliet”**
[Dire Straits](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&client=firefox-b-1&q=Dire+Straits&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgVuLUz9U3MDS3NLUEAIwpFgwNAAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjI1_LLkZXbAhUD7lMKHW8sB68QMQgsMAA)

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| --- | --- |
| A lovestruck Romeo sang the streets of serenadeLaying everybody low with a love song that he madeFinds a streetlight, steps out of the shadeSays something like, "You and me, babe, how about it?"Juliet says, "Hey, it's Romeo, you nearly gave me a heart attack"He's underneath the window, she's singing, "Hey, la, my boyfriend's backYou shouldn't come around here singing up at people like thatAnyway, what you gonna do about it?""Juliet, the dice was loaded from the startAnd I bet, and you exploded into my heartAnd I forget, I forget the movie songWhen you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"Come up on different streets, they both were streets of shameBoth dirty, both mean, yes, and the dream was just the sameAnd I dreamed your dream for you and now your dream is realHow can you look at me as if I was just another one of your deals?When you can fall for chains of silver you can fall for chains of goldYou can fall for pretty strangers and the promises they holdYou promised me everything, you promised me thick and thin, yeahNow you just say "oh, Romeo, yeah, you know I used to have a scene with him.""Juliet, when we made love, you used to cryYou said 'I love you like the stars above, I'll love you till I die'There's a place for us, you know the movie songWhen you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"I can't do the talk like they talk on the TVAnd I can't do a love song like the way it's meant to beI can't do everything but I'd do anything for youI can't do anything except be in love with youAnd all I do is miss you and the way we used to beAll I do is keep the beat and bad companyAll I do is kiss you through the bars of OrionJulie, I'd do the stars with you any time"Juliet, when we made love you used to cryYou said 'I love you like the stars above, I'll love you till I die'There's a place for us you know the movie songWhen you gonna realize it was just that the time was wrong, Juliet?"And a lovestruck Romeo, he sang the streets of serenadeLaying everybody low with a love song that he madeFinds a convenient streetlight, steps out of the shadeHe says something like, "You and me, babe, how about it?You and me, babe, how about it?"*Songwriters: Mark Knopfler**Romeo and Juliet lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group* |  |

In a few sentences, summarize what’s going on in the song.

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In a few sentences, explain how the song uses allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* to develop its plot or theme.

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**Extension Activity:** Choose a song that references *Romeo and Juliet* from the list provided. Look up the lyrics and read them, listen to the song, and watch the music video if one is available. Then, write a 2-3 paragraph analysis. In the first paragraph, summarize the meaning of the song. In the second/third, discuss how the allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* help develop the plot or theme of the song. Cite specific quotes from the lyrics to support your analysis.