

Book Review

Books For Youth - Fiction - General Fiction

Roman and Jewel

By Dana L. Davis.



Jan. 2021. 320p. Harlequin/Inkyard, \$18.99 ([9781335070623](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9781335070623)).

Grades 9-12.

[REVIEW](#). First published December 1, 2020 (*Booklist*).

Sixteen-year-old Jerzie Jhames has studied voice, music composition and theory, and acting all her life.

She's also a walking, talking, singing encyclopedia of Broadway knowledge. Now she's been cast as the under-study for superstar Cinnny's "Jewel," the lead in a new Broadway hip-hop retelling of *Romeo and Juliet*. Immediately, she meets Zeppelin, the model/musician cast as "Roman," and falls hard for him. But when unauthorized videos of rehearsal are anonymously uploaded and go viral, tempers flare, egos combust, and emotions short-circuit. Readers watch Jerzie plunge into the head-spinning world of first love mixed with a fiery helping of fame and tempered by Jerzie's good heart and supportive family. She is a likable and upbeat narrator who sings her way into readers' hearts while carrying her own tune. Despite a semi-clumsy attempt to parallel the Shakespearean masterpiece, Davis hits the stage running with an insider's look at the pre-preview rehearsals for an untested show, a peek into city nightlife, and an unabashed love of musicals. Hand to theater aficionados everywhere.

— *Jeanne Fredriksen*



Booklist Editors Recommend

Titles similar to *Roman and Jewel*

- *Pride*
- *The Love Curse of Melody McIntyre*
- *Ronit and Jamil*