

## Side 9: Scene Five, 75 to 79 (Marcus, Composer, Isaac Jaggard, William Jaggard)

Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head."

*Perhaps touching her hair...she laughs.*

### Transition from Four...

*The presses in Jaggard's print shop spring to life again—  
smacking and clanging as the work is restarted.*

*As we transition back to the print shop...*

### Five.

*Marcus and a compositor are looking at the Droeshout portrait  
of Shakespeare.*

MARCUS. I dunno.

COMPOSITOR. Yeah is that... Is that him?

MARCUS. Doesn't quite look like it, does it?

COMPOSITOR. I only met him twice but—

MARCUS. I saw him onstage a dozen times. In costume I'll warrant  
but...

COMPOSITOR. That's it! It's the ruff. Not sure about the ruff. Trying  
to make him look kingly I suppose.

MARCUS. I think it makes his head look like a ham on a platter.

COMPOSITOR. That's what it is. A touch decapitalional.

MARCUS. Floats there, eyeing you like a frog on a rock.

COMPOSITOR. Why do they need a picture of him anyway? Makes  
me nervous him looking at me while I'm trying to read.

MARCUS. Those two friends of his commissioned it special.

COMPOSITOR. Well I never heard of a book with a picture of the author in it. Seems to be beside the point.

MARCUS. Though they won't admit it, I find writers tend to like being noticed.

COMPOSITOR. Even the dead ones?

MARCUS. Especially them.

*Jaggard and Isaac enter in a hurry.*

JAGGARD. *Goddammit, blasted, shite.*

ISAAC. *Stop the presses. Stop them all.*

MARCUS. What's wrong now?

JAGGARD. *Goddamn, horsey, fucker.*

ISAAC. *I said stop working.*

MARCUS. AllRightAllRight.

ISAAC. How much have you done of *Romeo and Juliet*?

MARCUS. Most all of it.

COMPOSITOR. But you told us to finish the histories before going back to the lovey ones.

MARCUS. We're still ending with *Cymbeline* though, right?

ISAAC. Yes that's not at issue.

MARCUS. I do love that bit with the eagle. Now *that's* how you end a play.

ISAAC. *Marcus*. Have you printed *Troilus*? The order was *Romeo and Juliet* and then *Troilus*. Have you started *Troilus*?

MARCUS. Only a bit of it. The last page of *Romeo* and the first three of *Troilus* share a sheet.

ISAAC. Now they don't.

JAGGARD. *Fuckers.*

MARCUS. Well we've already printed ten of 'em.

ISAAC. Cross them out.

MARCUS. Cross them—?

ISAAC. *Troilus* is pulled. Cross it out on the ones already printed, we can't waste the paper.

JAGGARD. This is not my fault. Walley is a shite man.

ISAAC. You told me you had all the rights for all the plays!

JAGGARD. You never have *all* the rights. You *get* the rights. That's the fun of it.

ISAAC. You start printing things you don't own. This is why everyone in this business hates you.

JAGGARD. This is why everyone in this business knows who I am. I'll fix this.

ISAAC. You can't. Walley said no. In fact he said "No, you lowly rat, never in ten hells would I give it to you."

JAGGARD. Just caught him on a bad day.

ISAAC. You were trying to play him and it failed. This time, the one time we're working on something I care about, you are caught in your deceptions. Now we have *The Collected Works of William Shakespeare Except for That One Play We Lost Because the Publisher Is a Cad*.

JAGGARD. *I said I will fix this*. Walley has friends.

ISAAC. Have you ever wondered what that must be like?

JAGGARD. He has friends who owe me. Let me fix this the way I know how.

ISAAC. We are not putting anything but Shakespeare in this. Do not for a moment think—

JAGGARD. I'm not.

ISAAC. *Do not for a moment think of shoving some crap sonnets by some crap hacks in this book*.

JAGGARD. I've published more books than you've ever seen in your life. There's always something that goes wrong, just let me handle it.

ISAAC. That's why we're in this mess!

JAGGARD. *Trust me*. The rest of the work is set and printed?

MARCUS. All but the Greeky ones.

JAGGARD. Good. Get John and Henry to write something for the front.

ISAAC. What for the front?

JAGGARD. Some introduction. "We knew him, we loved him," whatever. Make it sound like love not profit.

ISAAC. That's what it always has been.

JAGGARD. Then they should have no problem penning it in a hurry. Actually do have them put something in there about buying it. "Buy the book you're reading, don't just read it," something. Then set the title page, roll the engraving, and there you have it. Fourteen comedies, ten histories, and somewhere between ten and eleven tragedies by the great playwright, published according to the True Original Copies, Printed 1623 by...Isaac Jaggard.

ISAAC. ...What?

JAGGARD. This is *your* book, son. The world should know it.

*A lovely moment that Marcus destroys.*

MARCUS. What about *Timon of Athens*?

*Pause.*

ISAAC. What?

MARCUS. We could put *Timon of Athens* instead of *Troilus*. I like *Troilus* better but both have their problems and—you know—*Timon* is kinda Greeky too.

*Pause.*

JAGGARD. I can get *Troilus* back.

ISAAC. (*To Marcus.*) Switch the plates to *Timon of Athens*, reset the contents page, and prep the picture.

MARCUS. About the picture.

COMPOSITOR. We'd suggest a bit more shading on the ruff.

MARCUS. Make him look less like dinner.

ISAAC. Like what?

*Isaac looks at the image.*

Oh God. Tell him to fix it.

MARCUS. Yessir.

ISAAC. Not you, you've got to work.

MARCUS. Yessir.

JAGGARD. Isaac, wait.

ISAAC. I'll do it.

JAGGARD. Son.

ISAAC. I have this under control now. And when this shop is mine...  
I will not run it like you.

*Isaac leaves. Jaggard is left.*

COMPOSITOR. Do you need some help, sir? Point you in the right  
direction?

JAGGARD. Somehow...I always know the right direction.

*Jaggard shoves the compositor on his way out and walks off.*

### Six.

*At the Globe Tap House.*

*Alice is reading John and Henry's dedication.*

*They watch her...*

HENRY. What. Alice. Is it bad? I knew it. *I knew it.*

JOHN. Let her read it, Henry.

HENRY. She's been reading it for ten minutes. What's wrong with it?

ALICE. Nothing's wrong with it, I'm reading it carefully.

JOHN. She's reading it carefully.

HENRY. I didn't think we'd have to write something. That's kind of  
the point of all this. I *speack* the speech.

JOHN. And I pay for it. And neither of us should be let near a quill.

ALICE. "It had bene a thing, we confesse, worthie to have bene  
wished, that the Author himselfe had liv'd to have set forth, and  
overseen his owne writings; But since it hath bin ordain'd otherwise,  
and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie  
his Friends, the office of their care, and paine, to have collected and  
publish'd them."

It's good.

HENRY. Is it really?

JOHN. Honestly, Ali. We need your honest eyes on this.

ALICE. The beginning is a bit...pecuniary. "Buy it first. That doth  
best commend a Booke."