

HENRY. Shakespeare.

EMILIA. (*His name hits her with profound nostalgia.*) Well. Now I'm terribly interested indeed.

EMILIA. Henry Condell! When she said it was you, I thought my maid had gone syphilitic. How is your wife, your children? Are you well? I heard about Burbage, dear brute. His Antony, I still remember. Do sit, don't stand, wine? I will.

HENRY. Yes, Lady Lanier. And I thank you for seeing me.

EMILIA. Emilia, Emilia. We're friends. We were. In a different life perhaps, but still. Why are you here, Henry?

HENRY. We need your help.

EMILIA. Oh. Who is we?

HENRY. John and I. And Will.

EMILIA. Will?

Emilia and Henry...

HENRY. If he were alive he'd never allow us to bother you, but... Well however he broke your heart I hope that the love you showed him once will bare itself again in this hour of need.

EMILIA. *My heart?* Is that what he said? Of course he did. The things men say away from women are never to be trusted.

HENRY. Do I offend you, milady?

EMILIA. Oh no, no. Though it was most certainly *his* heart that broke. He was not the kind of man who could keep a friend after being a certain kind of...friendly.

HENRY. You broke his heart?

EMILIA. Oh yes terribly. All those sonnets don't come from happy endings.

HENRY. I know it didn't end well between you two, but—

EMILIA. (*Quoting by heart Sonnet 147.*)

“For I have sworn thee fair and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.”

Thank you, Will. Thank you so much.