

HENSLOWE. Auditions round the back in five minutes.
If you are not there, Will, I will cast it myself. Ralph,
bring the pie round.

(HENSLOWE leaves with NOL in tow. WILL goes
to the bar.)

WILL. Give me to drink mandragora.

(MARLOWE enters.)

BARMAN. Straight up?

MARLOWE. Bring my friend a beaker of your best brandy.

BARMAN. Yes, Mister Marlowe.

MARLOWE. How goes it, Will?

WILL. Wonderful, wonderful. Most wonderful.

MARLOWE. Burbage says you're also writing him a play!

WILL. I have the chinks to show for it. (*puts down a coin for
the drinks*) I insist, and a beaker for Mister Marlowe.
And how is yours?

MARLOWE. Just finished. My best since *Faustus*.

WILL. I love your early work. This time?

MARLOWE. *The Massacre at Paris*. And yours?

WILL. *Romeo and Ethel the Pirate's Daughter*. (*off MARLOWE's
response*) Yes, I know.

MARLOWE. What's the story?

WILL. Well, there's this pirate...In truth I haven't written a
word.

MARLOWE. Well, Romeo is...Italian.

WILL. Marvellous.

MARLOWE. Always in and out of love.

WILL. That's good. Until he meets...

MARLOWE. Ethel.

WILL. Really?

MARLOWE. Juliet.

WILL. Juliet?

MARLOWE. The daughter of his enemy.

WILL. The daughter of his enemy.

MARLOWE. His best friend is killed in a duel by Juliet's brother or something. His name is Mercutio.

WILL. Mercutio. Good name. What happens to Ethel?

MARLOWE. Marries a blackamoor and is strangled with a handkerchief?

WILL. Inspired. Thank you, Kit.

NOL. Will, Mister Henslowe is about to start the auditions for Romeo.

MARLOWE. I thought the play was for Burbage?

WILL. That's a different one.

MARLOWE. A different one you haven't written?

WILL. (*calling off*) Next!