

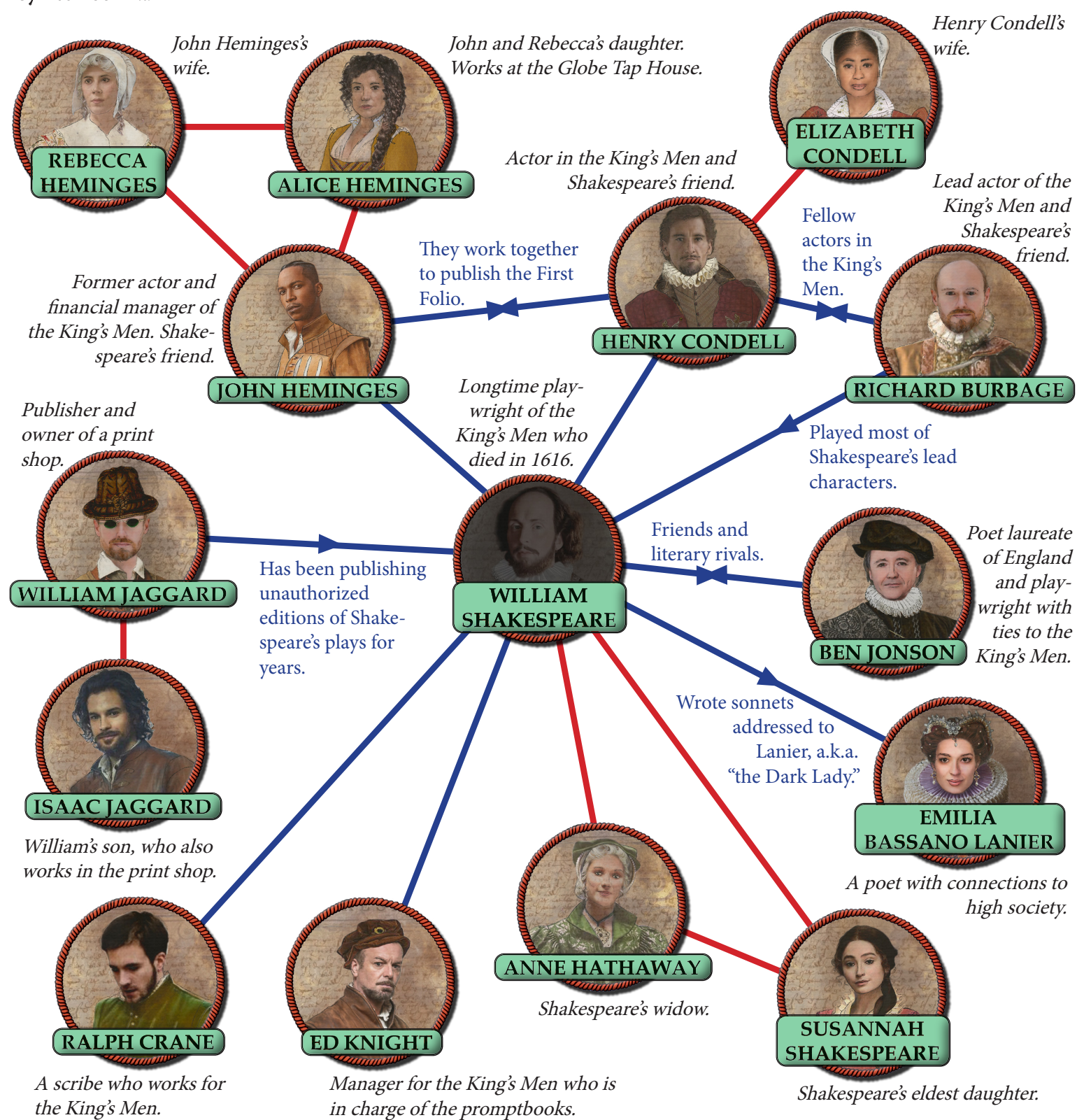
THE BOOK OF WILL

by Lauren Gunderson
Directed by Lori Adams

Costume Renderings
by Rachel Barnett
Character Diagram
by Kee-Yoon Nahm

MAJOR CHARACTERS

→ family relations
→ other relationships



London, 1619. It has been three years since William Shakespeare died. His friends and colleagues in the theatre are faced with a scary truth: many of Shakespeare's plays have never been published and only exist in the vast memories of seasoned actors like Richard Burbage. The alarm bells finally go off when Burbage suddenly dies in his sleep. Henry Condell and John Heminges, members of the King's Men, decide that something must be done before it's too late. Together with Henry's wife Elizabeth, as well as John's wife Rebecca and daughter Alice, they come up with an ambitious plan to collect and publish all of Shakespeare's plays in a single leatherbound volume. A folio.

The spirited group encounter many obstacles, but luckily, they have help. Condell and Heminges manage to track down Shakespeare's misplaced manuscripts through the assistance of Ed Knight, the manager at the Globe Theatre, and the meek scribe Ralph Crane, who turns out to be one of Shakespeare's greatest fans. Others come to the rescue just when the entire endeavor seems hopeless, including a few literary celebrities of the time. They support the project because they have fond memories of Shakespeare the man or his words, or both.

But not everyone is thrilled by the prospect of Shakespeare's plays published in a single volume. The shameless printer William Jaggard had been profiting from pirated editions of Shakespeare's plays for years, and now stands in their way. Will Condell, Heminges, and the gang succeed despite the odds? Obviously, we know that they do since the First Folio exists. But how did they get there?