Scene 6

The Assemblers - a little bruised but still victorious - eat foil-wrapped street-meat in celebration. Will enters.

Will: Excuse me—

Cleopatra: Sorry, we don't do autographs during our post-battle carbo-load.

Will: Is that shawarma?

Walter: Even better. Donair.

Hyde: Want some?

Richard: You can really taste the dog flesh!

Will: Ewwww… Tomato *and* onion? No thank thee.

Guy: Then move along then, Sirrah Nerd.

Will: Wait, why haven't I heard of you guys before?

Cleopatra: Well gee, we have only saved the planet like a million times—

Guy: *Today*.

Will: Hmm, you'd think I'd have noticed that… I am something of a detective.

Guy: Sure, and next you'll be saying that you also wear highly-advanced, animal-themed armour to fight crime which you can afford because you're secretly a billionaire philanthropist.

Richard: Peace, Master Fawkes. Belike our new friend is but a starstruck-lover of ours. 'Tis cool, man. I'm actually pretty flattered.

He puts his hand on Will's shoulder and considers.

Richard: That's odd…

Will: What?

Richard: Something about you feels… different.

Will: O yea, when you work out as much as I do you get all kinds of bumpy little muscles. You should touch my butt!

Hyde: Peace, sirrah: he's feeling thy blood.

Will: O maaan, we're not doing a vampire thing, are we, because I don't put down with that Morbius jive.

Walter: Nay, rather Doctor Masters here is England's leading expert in the four humours: the elements which comprise the human body.

Cleopatra: Ay, Doctor, I too sense it… An otherworldly vibe most weird… *Gasp!* By the hallowed hippo-head of hearty Tawaret… Thou hast mastered the Multi-Spheres!

Richard: Who are you, good traveller?

Will: I'm playboy/playwright, William Shakespeare.

Richard: I've never heard of thee—

Will: WELL FUCK YOU. I'm so sorry. I've been going through some stuff lately.

Hyde: Where are you from?

Will: Londontown, God save the King! Though, originally I'm from Stratford-Upon-Avon. You know, it's actually rather interesting—

Hyde: That's all right. It's really not that kind of play.

Walter: Wait, didst thou say, "God save the King"? What of her Majesty, Elizabeth?

Will: The queen died nearly a year ago.

Walter: What? How?

Will: O you know… Just your classic, old granny sort of way.

Hyde: And did everything change? Did the entire world shut down?

Will: Honestly it was a little anticlimactic.

Cleopatra: Those strange tempests must have brought thee hither: it takes magics most potent to ferry souls betwixt the Spheres.

Will: Really?

Cleopatra: (*Immensely offended and sarcastic*) UH NO I guess I don't know what I'm talking about, like I *wasn't* given superpowers by magic lightning hitting my pyramid! Definitely not my lane.

Richard: Cleo's right… Last night, as I charted the storm's progression, I could have sworn I noticed a mysterious, cosmic ejaculation—

Will: There has got to be a better name for that.

Richard: — and now here you are… A traveler from beyond, confirming my theories.

Hyde: O brave new multiverse!

Richard: Guy Fawkes, thou dost owe me a shilling!

Will: Wait—

Guy: Yea yea, I'm Guy Fawkes. O I'm sorry, did I just *blow* thy feeble mind?

Will: (*Not getting it*) Did you blow my mi… No? I mean, I know a *Lucius* Fox… Any relation?

Guy looks to Richard, scandalized.

Richard: Well, things *do* work differently in his Line of Time… Perhaps you haven't shown up yet. But aye, methinks some introductions are in order… Hit it!

Light change! Assembler theme music builds throughout.

Guy: Guy Fawkes.

Hyde: Susan Hyde.

Walter: Walter Raleigh.

Cleopatra: Cleopatra.

Richard: Richard Masters.

Guy: Politician.

Hyde: Spy.

Walter: Soldier.

Cleopatra: Pharaoh.

Richard: Doctor.

Guy: Gallop apace, ye fiery footed steeds!

Hyde: I can add colours to the chameleon, change shapes for advantages, and set the murderous Machiavel to school.

Walter: Follow thy drum; he which hath no stomach to fight, let him depart.

Cleopatra: Put on my crown: I have immortal longings in me.

Richard: By medicine life may be prolonged, yet death will seize the doctor too…

Guy: Zounds, this armour I made from discarded horseshoes to escape from debtors' prison— It uses the mighty powers of wind and the equally-impressive powers of steam to make me strong— Strong as a *pony!* Also I can fly. Like a horsefly! I am committing to this horse thing!

Hyde: O no, I shall surely be captured by these Flemish fiends! But wait, if I disguise myself as a boy, I may pass undetected… But that would require the greatest spy-skills in the kingdom… *Or at least a hat!!!*

Walter: I may not be the strongest or the smartest or the cleanest alpha male, but my tea-steeped blood flows as red as the English Rose. I'll volunteer myself for any of the Church's untested experiments if it means defeating the wicked-yet-toned Spanish.

Cleopatra: Where am I? The serpent's bite should have sent me straight unto the fabled Field of Reeds, yet here I am, breathing second life… Of course, this is just classic me.

Richard: My rare blood disease progresseth… But perchance the cure lies in these strange leeches. I hope the fact I got them from a radioactive pond doesn't matter. That would make me so mad!

Guy: I'm too late— My foes have control of the House of Lords. If I stand any chance of saving England, I must use my untested Gunpowder Tech to destroy the entire building! O well: I'm sure history will forgive me…

Hyde: My mastery of the subtler-fuges means no one recognizes me… but I know not myself… or where I come from, or who my real family is, or why I talk in my sleep, or why I can't do my taxes, or keep my plants alive. So many questions… But dammit if I don't have a face for hats!

Walter: Using the powers of prayer, radiation, and good ol' brainwashing, the English Church hath bestowed upon me many rare qualities, such as gunpowder-proof skin, super-muscles, and my new cape— forged from the world's strongest metal: *Strongium*.

Cleopatra: By the Lyrics of the Bangles, mighty Anubus hath granted me their potent gifts of enchantment, including venom sting, sand management, and perfect pitch. Now might I finally defeat the sinister Sphynx-Lord, Lord Sphincter!

Richard: Now, I change into something strong, and weird, and pink every time I start to feel a little bit pissy… And trust me: *you wouldn't like me when I feel a little bit pissy.* I am…

Guy: HORSEPOWER!

Hyde: QUICKCHANGE!

Walter: MAN-OF-WAR!

Cleopatra: CLEOPATRA!

Richard: BLOODLETTER!

Guy: Together, we are—

All: THE ASSEMBLERS!

Richard: ™.

They pose. The lights return to normal. Will applauds.

Will: Woot! Yea! Very cool!

Walter: You're just being polite. We are but a group of alchemically-enhanced, sexually-attractive, astrologically-diverse heroes sworn to protect the Realm…

Cleopatra: A tale so old it may as well be writ in hieroglyphics.

Will: Nay, never have I heard a tale as action-packed as this. And I once wrote about *three* merry wives! Say, have you ever considered telling your story on the stage?

Richard: Like a play?

Hyde: You think people would be interested?

Will: O ay. In fact, I reckon they would garner billions of pounds at the Global Box Office. That is to say, the Box Office at the Globe Theatre.

Cleopatra: Then let us begin at once!

Guy: For shame! You all disgust me. Especially thee, Richard.

Richard: What did I d—

Guy: Mighty Assemblers, have we forgotten about the *real* mission?!

Hyde: O, Guy Fawkes: thine infamous temper is as explosive as ever. Come, surely you can see how Shakespeare's idea can help us achieve the Directive.

Walter: Exactly. Doctor, take in the good playwright and make him most cozy whilst we remind Horsepower here of the many advantages to such a collaboration.

Exeunt. Will and Richard remain.

Richard: Come, you can stay in the spare dungeon.

Will: Dungeon?

Richard: O 'tis but a nickname. We actually rent it out on AirBNB.

Will: What's that?

Richard: You don't have that in your universe yet either? 'Tis basically a hotel but you can't do anything or have anyone over or eat inside. Come along.

Will: What was that talk of "the Directive"?

Richard: O, we've just been tracking down a bunch of these mystical Eternity Pebbles. If we find them all, we get a free sandwich.

Will: I must say, I am a little excited. To think, I was worried that I'd never write another play again.

Richard: O fear not: something telleth me that soon you'll have no shortage of new plays…

They exit.