

ACT I. Sc 1.

POLLY's screen turns on.

She gasps like she's waking from a dream. She wasn't supposed to be here.

There is a moment of anxiety until...

She sees the camera. She glares into it, swallows her vulnerability with an expertly worn mask of coolness.

ELIZABETH's screen turns on.

She's all smiles and charm.

ELIZABETH

Once more unto the--

(She realizes POLLY is the only other one here.)

Oh. Bugger.

ELIZABETH turns off her screen.

POLLY tries to inhale patience.

ANNIE's screen turns on.

ANNIE

Oh, hello Mrs. Nichols.

POLLY

Annie.

ANNIE

At it again, are we?

POLLY

So it seems.

ANNIE

Feels like we only just--

CATHERINE's screen turns on.

She is instantly annoyed.

CATHERINE

Dratted blazes and balls.

CATHERINE drinks from a bottle.

ANNIE

Hello, Miss Catherine.

CATHERINE

How many more times will we have to do this, Polly?

POLLY

As many times as it takes.

ANNIE

I thought last time it was really going to work.

ELIZABETH's camera turns on again.

She has the same rehearsed smile and charm that she had initially.

ELIZABETH

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
Or close the wall up with our English dead.

CATHERINE

I'd let em close up the damn wall with my own bones and the whole cussed royal family if it meant we could be done with this.

ELIZABETH

Are we all here?

POLLY

No.

ELIZABETH

Who's missing?

CATHERINE

One guess.

ELIZABETH

Bloody bugger.

POLLY

Can't start til we're all assembled.

ANNIE

That's alright. I'm in no hurry, I'll tell you that.

CATHERINE

Faster we start, faster we can be done with it.

ELIZABETH

Just to start again?

POLLY

You don't know that.

ELIZABETH

Of course we do, Poll.

CATHERINE

What makes you the expert, Miss Stride?

ELIZABETH

130 some odd years of experience, Mrs. Eddowes.

*MARY JANE's camera turns on while they argue.
She is quiet. Unsurprised. And poised under a great burden.*

POLLY

Knock it off! It seems Mary Jane has chosen to join us at last.

ELIZABETH

(scoffs)

Chosen.

POLLY

You're late, Miss Kelly.

CATHERINE

As usual.

MARY JANE says nothing.

POLLY

Right then...

All five women inhale one breath and exhale shifting their gaze to stare directly into their cameras.

POLLY

Now, for you lot. Watching us all gather to tell your favorite scary story, eh? Well guess what, loves. We're assembled. And He ain't here. Disappointed already, are you? Course. Because you didn't come here for Polly Nichols....

Rhythmically near overlapping...

CATHERINE

For Catherine Eddowes...

ELIZABETH

Elizabeth Stride...

ANNIE

Annie Chapman...

MARY JANE

Mary Jane Kelly.

POLLY

No.

You definitely didn't come here for us. No one ever does.

Let me guess: Googled Him, did you? Christ alive. We haven't had a moment's rest since everyone started this Googlin' business.

You see, time sort of escapes us where we are, but every time you say his name, we're called here to relive the bloody bits for your amusement.

And you're so blinded by the macabre details of what He done, that you can't even hear what we're tellin' you.

Well, you're gonna listen this time.

ANNIE

Look, we ain't mad at you. (*POLLY scoffs*) Well, we ain't. It's just... All these books bout Him have been written, movies have been made, and in all of em, we play such a small part. We're just the bodies it happens to. Imagine how it feels. To see all this time pass but nothing much change.

ELIZABETH

You still give all the wrong men all the wrong power. The blokes do bad things and live forever. Women Have Things Done to em, and disappear from history like they never lived at all.

CATHERINE

None of us grew up thinking we'd exactly leave a legacy behind us. (*Some stifled laughter at that*) We were poor women. And we always knew what that meant. Just to live was gonna be a fight. And the five us were good at that. We were strong. But you only know the weakness that was the last minutes...

POLLY

The last seconds

MARY JANE
The last hour...

CATHERINE
...of our lives.

ELIZABETH
And we're done with it.

POLLY
And just a warning to you lot, whatever you have thought of us in the past, whatever you think
He may have ripped from us...

MARY JANE
We take it back tonight.

POLLY
So, don't look away. You're comin along with us on this ride now, whether you like it or not. But
you should know, each of us are in our own place, now. Can communicate with each other just
fine--

ELIZABETH
Too fine, f'you ask me.

CATHERINE
No one did.

POLLY
--But we can't rightly interact like we used to. No bodies and all. So we'll tell our stories, best
we can. And you lot better keep up. Ain't no goin back this time.

CATHERINE
Hear, hear.

POLLY
Right then. Spose' we'll start with Annie pickin that nasty fight.

ANNIE
Posh, I did no such thing.

MARY JANE
Let them decide.

All cameras off.