

[Intro]

Steve-Hey everybody, and welcome to the podcast again. Today is a bit of a different show. It's a bonus episode. If you listened to our episode that came out on Thursday, you'll know that we had done an interview with Seth Margolis about Elizabeth I. And it was a great interview, and we had a lot of content, but we didn't use but a little bit in the episode, and we wanted to, to share that with you. So what we're going to do here is we're going to go ahead and actually share with you the interview. It was Joe and myself for that interview. Devin wasn't, unfortunately, able to make it. But it's a great interview. I, it's a lot of history and a lot of good information, and I think you're going to like it a lot. So, let's roll that interview.

Joe-You've done a lot more research on this, really, than we have, and so I guess I'd like to know, do you really think Elizabeth had a child?

Seth-You know, I don't know. I would suspect not. I tend to be a discounter of conspiracy theories.

J-Yeah.

Seth-And so, you know, it was a really intriguing idea for a novel, and there are bits and pieces of her life and the circumstances around it that might lead you to think she had a child, but I, I tend to think she didn't. But you know, I think it's sort of like, you know, if you think about the Kennedy assassination, again, I'm not a conspiracy theorist in general, so I think Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. But a lot of people just feel that it's just unthinkable that this great man who was so beloved at the time and maybe even more so in retrospect, could be brought down by one lunatic with good aim. You want it to be a conspiracy because it seems unfitting that such a great person could be eliminated by such a nobody. With Elizabeth there's a similar frustration that, you know, arguably the greatest, certainly the greatest monarch in English history, and maybe one of the great leaders in world history just ended, you know? Her line ended with her death, and the Tudors were no more. Her genes were no more. How could that be? It just doesn't seem fitting somehow. So people constantly want her to have left something behind. And in a way that's, I think that's part of the fascination with her in general, and it's certainly the reason that a lot of these theories continue to flourish, and it's really the reason I wrote the book.

J-So after Elizabeth's death, the Tudor line ended, and a lot of people believe that the English monarchy went kind of downhill after that.

Seth-Yeah, well, it, I mean, the Stuarts were particularly mediocre, and you know, they, within less than half a century, you know, led to the English Civil War with Oliver Cromwell, the assassination, or execution, of Charles I. But you could also argue that things didn't get much better after that. There weren't executions, but I don't know that, you know, there have been, that the monarchs who came after Elizabeth I never were a particularly distinguished bunch, no disrespect intended to the current queen who just turned 90. So I guess that's another source of frustration is that, you know, if she had had a child, I guess a son in particular, but a daughter too, that, you know, might have been, you know, who inherited her talent for leadership as well as her father's, it might have changed the course of history. Certainly the history that immediately followed. But, you know, I think that's another reason that people want to think, you know, that there could have been some, a different path.

J-So in real life, one candidate for a child was, of Elizabeth, that's really popular with a lot of people, was Robert Devereux. What do you think about him as a suspect?

Seth-Right. He was one of several people that she sort of showered her royal pleasures on in ways that, that mystified people at the time. You know, why him? And so there were always rumors. And she did have a, a very close relationship with his father, Robert Dudley.

J-Oh yeah.

Seth-Also known as Leicester. And you know, I think she had his bedroom moved next to hers, and you know, there's all sorts of, you know, if there was going to be an offspring, it would have been most likely with him. And there was actually, there was someone named Arthur Dudley who surfaced at one point, who claimed to be the offspring of the two of them.

J-Oh yeah. Showed up at Philip of Spain's place.

Seth-Yeah, because the Catholics never, never saw her as a legitimate, well as legitimate period, but as a legitimate monarch of England. So if they could find any sort of scandal that would, you know, add further illegitimacy to her, it would work to their ends. And in fact, in my book, that's one of the reasons that she disguises the fact that she had a child, was that it would just, it would imperil her, her claim to the throne. And of course, in *The Semper Sonnet*, she has the child before she becomes queen. Most of the rumors about, or the theories about her having a child, have her having the child while she was queen. And there's, and as I said, there's so many of them. You know, she, at one point, she, she took to her bed. She had some sort of mysterious illness, which I think they called at the time dropsy, but today we would call it edema, which is the swelling in the midsection. So of course if you, and I think that's pretty much historical fact, that she had, that she was taken to her bed with dropsy, or edema, and that she had a swollen abdomen. So if you're inclined to think that she had a child, this might have been a good time for that child to have been carried, because she had, you know, she could have used that as an excuse to disguise her pregnancy.

J-So it really would have been kind of hard to conceal the pregnancy, because, I mean, she was like the Princess Diana of her day, and there were so many eyes upon her.

Seth-It certainly does, and I think that's why I'm generally not a conspiracy theorist, like back to the Lee Harvey Oswald idea, you know? After all of these years it seems impossible that no one would have come forward to say they knew about this conspiracy. Not one person has come forward.

J-Uh huh.

Seth-And similarly in Elizabeth's time. The only difference is there, there were no cameras then. There were no recording devices, you know, so it would all have just been people sort of writing letters and so it would have been harder, I think it would have been much easier to disguise than in Princess Diana's day, our day. Any abnormality becomes fodder, you know, for the media, over the internet and so on.

J-Yeah.

Seth-So I don't, I think she could have hidden it, but, and the Elizabethan court was a really, to use an old-fashioned word, libidinous place. I mean, there were, you know, there was lots of intrigue going on. I mean, her own mother, Anne Boleyn, had been executed for adultery. She was the, the wife of the king, and many believed that she was, in fact, adulterous. So why would the wife of the queen [sic] take those kinds of risks if she didn't think there was actually a pretty good chance she could get away with it.

J-Uh huh.

Seth-And some people think she actually had, one of her lovers was actually her brother.

J-Oh, Anne Boleyn?

Seth-Yeah, which hastened her execution (laughing).

J-I don't know if she was guilty of adultery actually, cause Henry VIII did have a penchant for just wanting to move on, and getting tired of whoever he was with, and wanting to find himself a new wife.

Seth-We could do another podcast on that, you know, was she actually adulterous? But the point is that it wasn't so wildly unbelievable at the time that she might have been, because the court was a place of trysts and intrigue, and, you know, all of which is to say that it's, it's conceivable that Elizabeth could have disguised her pregnancy, and disguised her love affair with Dudley, or Leicester. Or thought she could have, because there was so much going on at the time. It was that kind of court.

J-You have found a new potential father for a child that Elizabeth might have had, named Miles Stafford. So, did Miles really exist?

Seth-No, I'm sorry to say.

J-It's ok (laughing).

Seth-It was much, I found it much more interesting to invent him and then dispatch him quickly. You never really hear from him, other than that he had this rare genetic disorder that passed on this tendency to shivering, as someone calls it in the book.

J-Uh huh.

Seth-Which I thought was an interesting sort of way to keep his, sort of, lineage alive, was you know, not in a particularly positive way. It also made it, you know, when you're writing a thriller, it made it interesting because, you know, when the, Lee Nicholson, the 21st Century heroine of the book, would come across various locations where the Filer family lived, she would see, for instance, two fireplaces in one room, and realize, you know, that became an indication that these people who lived there had a real obsession with staying warm (laughing).

J-Uh huh.

Seth-So, that's the one thing that I had my fictional father of the, the Elizabethan offspring pass on to his, his descendants. And of course, the name Filer, as you know because you read the book, it's full of word play. And you know, the word Filer, is an adaptation of the French word *fil*s for son, and “er” for, of course, Elizabeth Rex. And French was the main language spoken at the time, or a version of it, in the Elizabethan court, so it was like, you know, it was interesting, or likely that she would have had, if she had a child, might have given him that name as a sort of sly reference to who his, at least his mother was.

Steve-Seth, I have a question, so this is going to be kind of a break in what we've talked about so far, but how did you, how did you go about doing your research for the book? Cause there's a lot of content

here.

Seth-Well, I, this has been one of my favorite, the Elizabethan period, or really the whole Tudor period in England is my favorite in history. It's one of those really rare times in history where there just seems to be a confluence of really extraordinary people. So of course, you have Elizabeth, you have her father, Henry VIII, an amazing person. You have Anne Boleyn, a fascinating character. You have Dudley himself. You have Sir Walter Raleigh. Of course, you have Shakespeare, Bacon, and all the great artists of the time, writers. And I think another period that I'm also fascinated with, very different, is 18th Century America, when you had all the Founding Fathers, you know? All this rare confluence of just incredible intelligent, creative people coming together. And you know, there's always the debate, did the times make the man, the man makes the times? I don't know the answer to that. It's probably not even worth thinking about too much. But Elizabethan England, or Tudor England, was one of those periods. It's always been one of my favorites, so I'm fairly knowledgeable about it, you know, even before I started writing this book. But, you know, of course I ended up doing a lot of research. You know, you can do a lot of it on the web, including the "Elizabeth Files" site that you mentioned. I just went there, by the way, I certainly have been to that site many times.

J-Yeah.

Seth-There's a wonderful book by Liza Picard called *Elizabeth's London*, which is about sort of everyday life in Elizabethan England, which is something that you don't get a lot of when you read biographies of Elizabeth. You get very little of it, in fact. And it's a wonderful book. It's actually a lot of, a lot of fun to read, just about sort of what it was like to live at that time as an ordinary citizen rather than as a member of the court. And that really helped with a lot of the sort of small details about Elizabethan medicine, particularly childbirth. So the opening scene is actually quite factual, other than the fact that it involved Elizabeth having a baby, in terms of, you know, the ability to smell garlic as an indicator of pregnancy and things like that.

J-That's how they knew back in the day?

Seth-Yeah. They'd put garlic under, and if you couldn't smell it, it meant you were pregnant (laughing). It's probably not that simple, but there's a lot of added, the idea that men were not allowed in the birthing room, for instance, only midwives. The doctor was banished. And details like that came from this wonderful book called *Elizabeth's London*. And then at some point I started writing it and realized I needed to go to England directly. I'd been there many times before, but for specific scenes in the book. So I went Hatfield, which is the palace about, I think it's about 40 minutes from London, where Elizabeth was basically held a prisoner by her older sister Mary.

J-Ah.

Seth-Known as 'Bloody Mary,' the Catholic Tudor. She was sort of under house arrest there, and that's where the opening scene and the birth take place. And I just had to be there. There's no way you can write about it convincingly without going there. And I was able to convince, it's open part of the year to the public, but I was able to convince the people in charge there to let me in, and there's actually a new palace built by Cecil, Elizabeth's great advisor, but the old palace where she was held under house arrest, is still there as well. It's actually used for weddings and bar mitzvahs, apparently, today (Joe laughing). But I was able to...something I don't think Elizabeth would have appreciated. But I was able to, to tour it on my own and really get a sense of what the place looked like, and there's really no substitute for that. Yeah, I even was, you walk up from the gate house and then back down through the

little village around the edges of the estate, and you really get a sense of what it was like to live at that time, and so that was really key. And then the other thing, I did other research while I was there. I, one of the important venues in the book and a place that I spent a lot of time in while I was writing this was, obviously, Westminster Abbey, particularly the Lady Chapel at the very, I think it's the back, it could be the back or the front. It's basically, it's behind the altar, and it's where Elizabeth is buried, although if you read the book, not to give anything away, but that becomes questionable, but Elizabeth is buried there. Ironically, she's buried directly on top of her hated sister Mary. And I spent at least half a day there, sort of taking notes and trying to, you know, block out the scene. What was interesting was, you know, I'm probably sort of suspicious because I spent so much time there, but the guards there are actually called "beadles." It's very Dickensian. Maybe even Elizabethan. But...

J-I love the name, by the way.

Seth-It's amazing that they're still called that, and there was a succession of them coming in, you know, on and off shift while I was there, and what I really needed from them was information on the security. Not of, you know, the 16th Century (Joe laughing)...

J-Yeah, the cameras and stuff.

Seth-The cameras, yeah. So I, so I would, you know, pull them aside and say "What's that up in the corner there?" And they'd look at me like I was insane or possibly dangerous, and say, "Well, you know, that's an infra-red camera." (laughing). So then I'd, you know, they gave me more details about when they go on, when they go off, so that I was able then to do some research on how you could disable them using, actually, the foam from a fire extinguisher. So, and I was really worried I'd be stopped on the way out, but maybe they were just happy to see me go after all the hours I'd spent there. That was the kind of research you really can't do on the internet. You have to go there and see for yourself.

J-I notice that your character, Lee Nichols [sic] does the same thing, and...

Seth-It's hard not, it's hard to hang out without moving, because you look more suspicious than if you move around, I think.

J-Yeah. You know, I'm really sorry I've never been to Westminster Abbey. I've been to London, and I guess I have to go back to London now, because I really want to see it now.

Seth-Oh, it's really amazing. I mean, it, particularly that part of it. It's just beautiful, and it's so full of history. It's good. Actually, the character of Lee says that it was never her favorite place because it's a place that commemorates death with inscriptions rather than a place that anyone lived, but I don't feel that way. I feel overwhelmed by history when I walk in there.

Steve-Why is it, Seth, that you believe that there's this continuing fascination with Elizabeth?

Seth-I think it's a couple things. The fascination with her is because she was just out and out one of the most fascinating political leaders ever to live. And part of that is just that she was an absolute monarch of a great nation and helped oversee England's transition from maybe a second-rate power to one of, you know, a first-rate power, particularly through the defeat of the Spanish and the Spanish Armada. And I, so there's that. And I think the fact that she never married is doubly fascinating, cause she, you know, she didn't get to power in the usual, or she didn't hold on to power in the usual ways, which is

exercising it through a man. I mean, even her older sister Mary married Philip of Spain, and they were very much co-rulers. But Elizabeth had none of that. There's a great line that I actually quote in the novel, *The Semper Sonnet*, by the Scottish ambassador, and he says, "I know the truth of that, Madam. You need not tell it me. Your Majesty thinks if you were married, you would be but Queen of England, and now you are both King and Queen." And I think that really sums up why a lot of people are fascinated by her. That she just ruled, kind of, on her own terms and, you know, whether or not she had a child, and presumably she didn't, she didn't marry, and she didn't marry because she just did not want to, to share power with anyone. And that's such a, from a historical purpose, or perspective rather, that seems such an interesting and unusual attitude. Today we wouldn't think twice about it, but then, just the idea that a woman wanted absolute power, wouldn't even share it with a man, seems quite interesting. As for having a child, I think that the fascination with that is, again, people just can't, don't want to accept the idea that it all ended with her. That this, that this brilliant, brilliant woman, daughter of a brilliant though quite vicious father, sort of through her refusal to marry and have a child, ended this great, sort of, genetic line. So that people, you know, are very, they cling to any theory or minor fact that might prove otherwise.

J-Yeah.

Seth-And I think that's really what it's all about.

J-Well yeah, there's that whole thing about keeping the question of marriage open as a way to keep threats away, such as, let's say, Philip of Spain, for example, who, if he had married Elizabeth, would have taken England through marriage instead of through a military campaign.

Seth-Right. And she also held on to an important bargaining chip, so for as long as she wasn't married, she could use her marriage as a carrot to, you know, attract potential foreign suitors. And she did that all the time. She was forever negotiating marriage, you know, sending her ambassadors out to negotiate marriage contracts that never amounted to anything, but it, as you say, held off war, but also enabled her to be in a good bargaining position. You know, not to get political on this, but maybe it shows why her life still resonates so deeply with people. The other night I was watching some news show about Ted Cruz picking Carly Fiorina as his running mate, and people said, "You know, it's obvious why he did it." But some bright pundit said, "You know, he's given up an important bargaining chip, because now when he goes to the convention, he already has the vice president picked. He can't hold that out as a lure to attract other supporters." And I think that Elizabeth, this is where it all ties in, Elizabeth did the same by not marrying. She always had something that she could promise. There was always the lure of giving away her hand in marriage to attract, to gain concessions and so on. So, you know, it's funny how those lessons from the 16th Century still hold relevance to today. And the other thing in my book, as you know, the opening scene, I'm not giving anything away, is she gives birth...

J-Yeah.

Seth-...and it's a pretty horrendous birth. I think most childbirths at the time were. There were certainly no, uh, anesthesia at the time.

J-Oh yeah.

Seth-And she was so, in my book, she was so horrified at having to endure that again that she vows right then, "I'm never going through this again." And there were theories that one of the reasons that she never married was that if she married she'd be expected to have a child, and if she had a child, she,

like, I don't know the exact figure, but, you know, a big percentage of women would die in childbirth.

J-Oh yeah.

Seth-And thus, not only, you know, imperil her own life, but imperil the reign, and imperil the Tudor Dynasty, and put her country at risk. So in *The Semper Sonnet*, I make that quite explicit. She knew about the peril because she had gone through it, but a lot of people think that's one of the reasons that she never had a child. That she simply was afraid that it would kill her. That that would not only be, obviously, be not good for her but it would be very, it would put the entire kingdom at risk.

J-Yeah, well, chastity was not as uncommon in those days because actually, I mean, death in childbirth was very common, and there was also things like venereal disease.

Steve-Which were incurable.

J-Exactly.

Seth-There were. I mean, you know, but remember back, Elizabethan England, it wasn't, it wasn't, certainly at court, it wasn't a completely chaste situation, and actually, you know, virginity was sort of mocked. There are instances in Shakespeare where it's mocked. It's not necessarily, it's certainly talked about publicly as a virtue, but it was made fun of a bit behind the scenes. But the truth is she actually gloried in it, in her virginity, and she talked about it all the time. It was sort of a triumph of her will over, you know, corporeal [sic] desire. You know, the colony of Virginia was named for her virginity, you know? So it was something...

J-Oh really? I didn't realize that.

Seth-Yeah. And so, you know, she gloried in it not because, I think, it showed a sort of Christian virtue so much as it showed her strength, you know, her resistance.

J-Yeah, resolve.

Seth-And to have a colony named for your, for your virginity is really quite extraordinary when you think of it.

J-Yeah, it really is.

Seth-And if, and in fact, if any of these theories are ever proven correct, will they have to rename Virginia? (Joe laughing). And what would they rename it, more importantly? I...

J-I guess they would call it Pregnancia, maybe (laughing).

Seth-And of course, there's be West Pregnancia (all laughing).

J-You know, I want to say, by the way, I thought it was really funny that William Shakespeare makes an appearance in your book, but he didn't actually get any lines.

Seth-Well, it was. I mean, first of all, I just was, as you know, *The Semper Sonnet* is a sonnet purported to be by Shakespeare, which I, unfortunately, had to write. And then not only write, but then embed

with all sorts of cryptic clues and things like that.

J-Yeah, I was going to ask you about that. How tough was that?

Seth-Oh, it was impossible. I spent so long, first of all, just writing a Shakespeare sonnet, which this sonnet will fool nobody that it was, that it's by Shakespeare, but you know, just writing the sonnet, you know, the fourteen lines with the rhyme scheme was really, really hard. And then almost every line in it has an embedded clue. But, you know, I'm addicted to English crossword puzzles. I don't know if you're familiar with them from *The Times*, *London Times* or *The Guardian*. They do different kinds of puzzles than American puzzles, which I'm also addicted to. They do cryptic puzzles, which are full of puns and anagrams and double entendre and things like that. And all of that is very much embedded in the sonnet, and actually in other parts of the novel as well. So, and that goes back to Shakespeare himself. He, you know, as you know, his plays, and his sonnets to a lesser extent, are full of puns and plays of words. You know, in *Romeo and Juliet*, when Mercutio is dying, he's known as a sort of joker or jester, and he says, "I may still be a joker, but ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man." So any cryptic crossword compilers, they're called, or setter, or creator, would love that double entendre and would use it in their crosswords. And so I wanted to embed that in the sonnet, and then that was a way, the sonnet was a way of connecting the story in Elizabeth's England with the story in the 21st Century, because the sonnet is discovered by Lee Nicholson, and so she gradually uncovers the meaning of the sonnet, and what it said about Elizabeth's child, for instance.

J-So why did you choose a female lead character?

Seth-Well, you know, I wanted to, I thought it would be interesting to make the protagonist a woman. I thought it would be an interesting contrast with, you know, Elizabeth living, I guess, four or five hundred years before, and a woman living in the 21st Century, and all the differences in their lives. So that's really how I came up with her, with just thinking, you know, I want to write a novel about two women essentially. One, the great Elizabeth, and one, someone named Liz living in the current day who, or Lee rather, not to give anything away, Lee living in the current day who, you know, has many more choices and can live a much different life, but, and in some ways has more, sort of, personal power than even an absolute monarch living in the 16th Century. And that's really how I came up with her. I thought it would be interesting to contrast two women living at different times. And I made her a scholar of Elizabethan literature just because I knew that would be how she would plausibly come into contact with this supposedly lost sonnet and be able to read it and understand its significance.

J-And so Lee Nichols [sic] goes on her own in the investigation rather than, you know, having a man backing her up or anything like that, much, kind of like Elizabeth.

Seth-Yeah. And I wanted that to be the case also, that she, she took her pleasure where she wanted and needed it, but that she was very much determined to be independent and to be alone and actually has, you know, in 21st Century terms we'd say, maybe, intimacy problems. I don't know that Elizabeth would have said that about herself, but, and that's exactly right, that was the contrast that I thought would be interesting to explore in this book.

J-So you hinted in an email to us that there was a final clue in the book that didn't get solved. So what was that final clue?

Seth-Yes, I thought it would be fun, as I said I am an avid solver of English cryptic puzzles, particularly those in *The Guardian*, which you can get, you can download free from the internet. And I'm hoping

that the book will connect with people here and in England, and everywhere, who do these puzzles, because they are a bit of an obsession. And the clues that are within the sonnet are all the kinds of clues that someone who solves English cryptic puzzles would immediately see as clues and would work at, and probably be able to, solve. So when, in one of the very last scenes, I'm going to try not to give anything away about the novel, but in one of the very last scenes of *The Semper Sonnet*, just before Lee tosses, I don't want to say (laughing). Before she disposes of a certain important element of the book, let's say...

J-Yeah.

Seth-...she writes on a piece of paper, I'll just read it, it's only four short lines, she writes on a piece of paper, "Here Queen, for word I bring from distant time and place/ The auger class, the common man, in firm embrace/ Honi soit qui mal e pense/ You friend of gold are made in France." So *honi soit qui mal e pense* is the emblem of, I think it's the Royal Order of the Garter, but it's actually the motto of the English Royal Family. Interestingly, it's in France [sic], but it means, "Shame on you who think bad of it." *Honi soit qui mal e pense*. So I embedded that. But anyone who does cryptic crosswords of the type that run in *The Guardian* and *The Times*, would be able to read those four lines and instantly know that those are cryptic clues that have a very specific solution. So I have it in there. She tosses it into the sea, the character Lee. But, and doesn't tell the reader what those lines mean, but I'm hoping that there are readers of the novel who see it as an embedded clue and are able to solve it. And I'm hoping actually to connect with them, maybe through Twitter or Facebook or somehow, because it intrigues me, and I'm curious how many people will recognize that for what it is.

J-That'd be really interesting to see, you know, if people really do solve it, and, you know, who shows up to solve it. And it would be cool to see how many people respond. And I'd like to ask you, by the way, is there going to be a sequel to your book? Where the problem that's kind of at the heart of *The Semper Sonnet* will, sort of, come back again?

Seth-Well, so I may write a sequel. I sort of fleshed it out in my mind a little bit. It won't involve *Semper*, per se. It will involve Lee and the secret that we know about her from the end of the book. And it will also involve her sort of, a bridge between the 21st Century and the character of Lee, and Elizabethan England, so it will have that. It won't be *Semper* again, no. So I have sort of sketched that out. A little bit on paper, mostly in my mind. Because I like her as a character, and I like what we know about her at the end. I think it's sort of interesting.

J-Yeah.

Seth-So it would, I think it would be fun for me to try to keep her alive. So I'll see how, if readers connect with her as a character. And if I do, then I will definitely, I will solve the clue for all those who didn't solve it themselves, on their own.

J-Well Seth, it's been fun talking to you...

Steve-Indeed.

J-Yeah, but it's, you're probably out of time and so is there anything else, before we wrap up the interview, that you'd like to tell us?

Seth-Well, not really. I mean, the one thing that I think is interesting, and that might be relevant to this

podcast, is that one of the theories, you've probably come across it in your research, that is not explored in *The Semper Sonnet*, but is something that I've been aware of, and sort of, in some ways, ties it all together, is that, you know, one of the other theories about Elizabeth is that she actually was, you know, had had a child with The Earl of Oxford, so of course, you know, there's all these theories that Elizabeth had a bastard child, but there's also even more theories that Shakespeare didn't write his own plays. And there's, you know, all sorts of theories advanced for who that could be, and one of them is Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, who was in fact a writer on his own. And so, you know, the thought it that he was the true author of the works of Shakespeare.

J-Oh yeah.

Seth-And so there's theories that actually, Elizabeth had an affair with him, and that their child was someone named, was the Earl of Southampton, who figures prominently in some of these, in these theories. I think the sonnets are dedicated to him. So, in a weird way, the conspiracy theories about Elizabeth having a child and Shakespeare not writing his own books, are conjoined with this theory that she might have been, actually had an affair with the Earl of Oxford, Edward de Vere, who was the true Shakespeare. There are also theories that their son was the true Shakespeare.

J-Yeah.

Seth-And the Francis Bacon was, and she might have had an affair with him, or that he, in fact, was the son of her's, so it all gets very, very tangled. It's also, just as we, it seems frustrating that a great person like Elizabeth, you know, couldn't pass on her greatness to another generation and generations after that, there's also a frustration that, you know, the greatest writer of the English language, perhaps any language, was this obscure actor/playwright who we don't know much about. It would be so much more satisfying to think that he was one of these larger than life characters like the Earl of Oxford or Francis Bacon. And so from that frustration, I think, is born all of these conspiracy theories.