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*The Criterion*



# The Criterion

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**Hail, to thee Blithe Spirit!!****Mohona Chatterjee**

- Cordelia - Beware! Storm ahead!
- Lear - Before a haunted hovel? Where have you brought me Cordelia?
- Cordelia - Upon the heath! Fool's heath.
- Lear - Fool stays here?
- Cordelia - No, not here **[Pointing to the hovel]**, there he lives. This is where he works, struts and frets his hour.
- Lear - Upon this Stage?
- Cordelia - Not a great stage of fools, this is where we rehearse, recapitulate. Is play a mere thing? The Fool is no fool. He knows it's when and whereabouts and this is perhaps known to the –
- Lear - Almighty?
- Cordelia - Umhu! Fool asked me not to take the name of Almighty.
- Lear - Why?
- Cordelia - Fool says when you trust Almighty, you trust not yourself. As flies to wanton boys we are not to Gods. Trust your work.
- Lear - Believe not in God? We even can't utter His name?
- Cordelia - No, He will give you nothing!
- Lear - What about Holy Christ then?
- Cordelia - No faith. No trust. No, kill for our sport.
- Lear - But... we PRAY... 'Our Father in Heaven... Holy be your name.' 'God bless!'
- Cordelia - Stop it! Stop it I say! I will get accustomed; pronounce 'Amen', stuck in my throat, in front of the Fool!
- Lear - I was wondering...
- Cordelia - Don't wander lonely. The Storm will toss your head. [Softly] take the broom and sweep all your anxiety. For so long I am working, not once you have –
- Lear - [Embarrassed] Please, give it to me –
- Cordelia - What? What are you doing?
- Lear - Why?
- Cordelia - I have swept all the tattered robes away and YOU, bringing them back?
- Lear - O my gosh! **[Sweeps again]**.
- Cordelia - Horrible! Haven't I told you that Fool stays there?
- Lear - Oh yes! Oh yes!
- Cordelia - Nothing will come out of you! See better, Lear.

Lear - O! Most small fault! Forgive my sin as we forgive those who sin against us, Amen!

Cordelia - **[Disgusted]** “Amen”? Whom did I bring here? Good Lord **[Ashamed]**. Just see! **[Angry]** He gives us nothing... repeatedly told you... Did you hear me? Trust, faith, prayers give us nothing.

Lear - Where Cordelia? I have only asked to forgive my sin as we forgive those who sin against us... A...A...A... O my gosh!

Cordelia - Out of my sight!

Lear - So young and so untender!

Cordelia - **[Laughs]** Finish your work! Fool in no minutes shall arrive!

**[Cordelia rehearses replete with emotions]**

**{Male}** What can you say to draw? A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

**{Female}** Nothing my Lord.

**{Male}** Nothing?

**{Female}** Nothing.

**{Male}** Nothing will come out of Nothing. Speak again.

**{Female}** Unhappy that I am, I can't heave my heart into mouth; I love your Majesty  
acCordeliang to my bond, no more, no less.

**{Male}** How how Cordelia! Mend your speech a little, lest you may mar your fortunes.

Lear - How beautiful! What is this play?

Cordelia - Forgot! But I play the role of Cordelia.

Lear - Cordelia? And one with the hoarse voice?

Cordelia - He? He is the KING of...

Lear - ... Of what?

Cordelia - Don't know. Fool taught me. I only did rote. Forgot!

Lear - When will be performed?

Cordelia - This is just a trial! Not for the great stage: a rehearsal. Just PLAY.

Lear - So much for rehearsal? I exit.

Cordelia - We are TRAPPED! I, myself never thought I could play. Let Fool TEST you.

Lear - TASTE me? Am I a delicious dish?

Cordelia - Not TASTE but TEST, your mind – whether free and body, delicate...

Lear - I, busy old fool. Such unruly, fond, old man, four score and above.

Cordelia - Fool looks for such poor naked wretches.

Lear - But theatre is for KINGS, I have lost my kingdom.

Cordelia - Power makes a man FOOL.

Lear - The fool lives in a fool's paradise- So is named FOOL. But he must be learned?

Cordelia - He follows knowledge like a sinking star.

Lear - Why is this poor fool not hang'd then?

- Cordelia - Many a hangings make a good artist! He is DIFFERENT!
- Lear - What does an artist do?
- Cordelia - Acts. All the world's a stage for him.
- Lear - That provides food?
- Cordelia - Not really! His good fooling provides us coins.
- Lear - I fear Cordelia.
- Cordelia - Fear?
- Lear - Fool will test my mind- am I not more sinned against than sinning? I am incorrigible!  
He will throw me out!
- Cordelia - No, never. That's why you are brought to the great stage of FOOLS and I play.
- Lear - But who are the other player, Cordelia?
- Cordelia - They won't come today.
- Lear - Who are there?
- Cordelia - Quince, the carpenter, Malvolio, the steward and Benvolio, a benevolent  
young chap.
- Lear - How well they all play?
- Cordelia - To play well or not to ....hardly matters.....if you can spit, fire spout rain, you will  
click.
- Lear - Fire? What is it?
- Cordelia - I don't know. That's Fool's headache.
- Lear - You have it in yourself?
- Cordelia - Fool says, "I am Fool."
- Lear - I find nothing in me. I feel bellyful rumble, spitting fire.
- Cordelia - That's just appetite, may sicken and so die. That's not that fiery strain.
- Lear - Fantastical?
- Cordelia - Your mind is tempest tossed!
- Lear - No, no more fanciful thought! Play again Cordelia.
- Cordelia - O! Stay and hear! Lear, a beautiful song here.
- Lear - I hear, I hear.
- Cordelia - **[Sings]** *Love me brought.*  
*Love me wrought*  
*Love more than thou sayest,*  
*Speak less than thou knowest.*
- Lear - This is horrible pleasure! No more of it!
- Cordelia - Why not? Such a beautiful song?
- Lear - Music, food of love. No more of it. O! O! It is sweet and bitter.
- Cordelia - Tempest in your mind? Endure Lear, listen.

**[Sings]** *Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness.*

*Close blossom friend of the maturing sun*

*Conspiring with him how to load and bless*

Lear - **[Claps]** If music be the food of life play on! Give me more of it.

Cordelia - **[Sings]** *With fruit the vines that round the thatches run*

*To bend with apples the massed cottage trees*

*Ripen fruits and in the brooks giggling geese.*

*Unto to sweet birds throat*

*Come hither! Come hither! Come hither!*

Lear - Cordelia – shall I ask you something?

Cordelia - What?

Lear - **[Sings]** Come hither! Come hither! Come hither! – If the Fool does not repair me will you allow to set my rest in your kind nursery?

Cordelia - Repair not your violent harms? Who said?

Lear - I know. The bellyful rumble spitting fire can't be gorged. **[Sings]** *Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness...* hu ...hu...hu **[Dances]** Say me Cordelia? **[Sings]** *Come hither! Come hither! Come hither!*

Cordelia - **[Sings]** With the wings of the fire, I shall embrace my becoming!

Lear - What? What is the word? Wings of fire?

Cordelia - The wings of fire...it takes you higher...to RECREATE.

Lear - To RECREATE? What to RECREATE?

Cordelia - Hear, Lear – with wings of fire, I shall embrace my becoming!

Lear - Nothing new in it? Wings of fire will take us higher.

Cordelia - True. Nothing new in it...But you know ...I forget...I now wish to fly with the wings of fire which will take us higher. Do you wish the same?

Lear - **[Thinks]** May be. Never wished before. Now I wish if with the wings of fire....

Cordelia - **[Sings]** *When not in perfect mind, doubtful, mainly ignorant*  
*Dream of wings-up-lifting things.*

Lear - Dream of wings ?

Cordelia - Dream of wings-up-lifting things...When not in perfect mind...

Lear - You are a poor fool Cordelia, Aren't you?

Cordelia - Lear, you, FOOL too.

Lear - After I enter the playhouse Cordelia. Are these lines from the same play?

Cordelia - No it's DIFFERENT! Whether for play ...not known. Philomel has taught me this melody. How well does he sing, Plays flute! He is an actor.

Lear - Does he understand the meanings of the song?

Cordelia - No. The FOOL explains us. Whenever Philomel sings lullaby, he comes to the Fool and the Fool makes him understand. Otherwise how would it be possible?

[Sings] *Dream of wings-up-lifting things*

*When not in perfect mind...*

Lear - I cannot sing. How will I? Cordelia – you didn't answer me –

Cordelia - What?

Lear - If the Fool does not repair me, will you see and hear this Lear?

Cordelia - Your tears do scald like molten lead. Restoration hangs thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss repair those violent harms that my two sisters have in thy reverence made!

Lear - Who is this?

Cordelia - She is Cordelia.

Lear - Cordelia. Cordelia. Lear's beloved?

Cordelia - The Fool said – she is much more than that.

Lear - Much more? May be. Beloved – not such. Who will play her part?

Cordelia - She has no part to play. This is not for the play house. Mere practice.

Lear - Such mighty words – Only for practice?

Cordelia - I too said the same. The fool said – Mighty words be not uttered.

Lear - What?

Cordelia - Yes. This is from a masterpiece. No more masterpieces. We ourselves will carry the operation in the wooden 'O'.

Lear - We??

Cordelia - We. The people like Benvolio, Malvolio and others.

Lear - Your Fool, he wears motley in his brains!

Cordelia - For sure! Otherwise who would mend our soul?

Lear - True Cordelia! But after you are repaired how do you work? Can concentrate?

Cordelia - **[Male voice]** The peace on the shores, the shackles are released.

Lear - What?

Cordelia - Yes. Every morning, the daily chores do not interest me. The division, split, betrayal, the ups and downs bogs me no more. Now I sing, I remain happy and time happens to fly.

Lear - Can I be happy too?

Cordelia - May be.

Lear - Cordelia? Why did you bring me here? Do you take upon yourself to cure me out of my madness?

Cordelia - Never. How can I cure you?

Lear - Then?

Cordelia - Are you alone? Are your senses untuned?

Lear - Alone. Untuned. I have everything and now, nothing.

Cordelia - Same with me. Flute, Malvolio, Benvolio also has nothing. The fool searches such  
Country Bobo.

Lear - Country Bobo feels bellyful rumble spitting fire, gorging appetite?

Cordelia - Why do you repeatedly ask me this? That is Fool's business. How will I know ?

Lear - **[Sings]** To bend with apples the mossed cottage trees

Cordelia - **[Sings]** Ripen fruits and in the brooks the giggling geese.

Lear & - Unto the sweet birds' throat

Cord - Come hither! Come hither! Come hither!

Fool - Hail to the blithe spirit, that from heaven or near it, Pourest thy full heart...

Cordelia - Here he comes. **[The Fool enters]**

Fool - Although the evening is spread against the sky like the wheel of fire – Cordelia! So  
you have come! How long? Who is this?

Lear - Who is it that can tell me who am I? My name is Lear. Master. **[Bows down the head in  
an act of reverence]**

Fool - **[Disgusted]** What was that?

Cordelia - **[Angry]** Just forget to say her dear Fool. **[To Lear]** Get up I say! Don't bow down.  
Here no body is the Master of any body. Get up I say!

Fool - Be pleased Cordelia. Don't be a dragon and show your wrath. It is Lear whom you were  
speaking of, I guess?

Cordelia - Yes.

Fool - Mad?

Cordelia - Lear is mad again.

Lear - What?

Fool - Dear Lear?

Lear - I am called Lear by everyone.

Fool - LEAR? Not done. Fine, done. Lear – Lair – Leer – Lair – Layered –  
DEAR LEAR. A bit big. Ok, fine – LEAR – LEAR.

LEAR – LEAR - EN – EE – DEE! LEARNED!

Lear - My Cordelia used to call me father DEAR.

Fool - DEAR or LEAR?

Lear - Yes, Lear but my Cordelia –

Fool - Where is your Cordelia?

Lear - Hanged.

Fool - Gloucester?

Lear - He died too.

Fool - Regan and Goneril?

Lear - Left me alone!

Fool - They pay no heed of you?

Lear - No, They don't.

**[Naturally they catch the hands of each other]**

Fool - Did you love your daughters?

Lear - Yes, perhaps.

Fool - What does Goneril and Regan do?

Lear - Stays with Betrayal.

Fool - And Kent?

Lear - Banished.

Fool - Why didn't you REIGN again?

Lear - How many times shall I REIGN? How long shall I?

Cordelia - Why I did RAIN thrice.

Lear - What Cordelia? Never seen it.

Fool - See better, Lear!

Lear - Why did you RAIN thrice?

Cordelia - I was deprived and lost the likings of my father – my eyes were blind with tears. My father, dear Lear, was as mad as the vexed sea – I cried. Last, when Lear asked to forgive and forget – I wept and Lear felt my tears wet.

Lear - I pray weep not! I know you do not love your father for your sister have and done him wrong. You have some cause, they have not.

Cordelia - Cause? May be.

Fool - **[To Lear]** Where do you stay?

Lear - Now upon the health. By the green-world. Before a hovel.

Fool - What do you do?

Lear - I toil like Cordelia.

Fool - Toil and Trouble? Divide and Bubble?

Tgthr - We divide and bubble.

Fool - You split?

Tgthr - We split.

Fool - You whine?

Tgthr - We whine.

Fool - Reaching home, you cry?

Tgthr - We cry.

Fool - You howl?

Tgthr - We howl.



Fool - Do you make the cauldron bubble?  
Tgthr - We make the cauldron bubble.  
Fool - Double, Double, do you toil and trouble?  
Tgthr - Double, Double, we toil and trouble.  
Lear - [**Absent minded**] We toil and trouble.  
Cordelia - [**With force**] We toil and trouble.  
Lear - Toil and trouble.  
Fool - Do you wish to sing like birds in the cage?  
Lear - What?  
Cordelia - Sometimes. We wish to sing like birds in the cage.  
Fool - Do you wish to laugh at the gliding butterflies?  
Cordelia - We wish, sometimes, to laugh at the gliding butterflies.  
Fool - Your heart, aches?  
Cordelia - Our heart aches. Isn't Lear?  
Lear - Our heart aches.  
Fool - Nice to see the country green.  
Tgthr - Country green.  
Fool - Nice to see the world unseen.  
Tgthr - The world unseen.  
Fool - Fade away into the forest dim?  
Lear - Fade away?  
Cordelia - Fade away ... into the forest dim.  
Fool - In my dream, a song to sing. Isn't it Cordelia?  
Cordelia - True. A song to sing in my dream.  
Lear - In my dream?  
Cordelia - In my dream, blushful Hippocrene.  
Lear - [Fainting] Blushful Hippocrene.  
Cordelia - Poesy and her viewless wings.  
Lear - Her viewless wings.  
Cordelia - At my feet, flowers sweet.  
Lear - Flowers sweet.  
Cordelia - In my dream.  
Lear - In my dream, in my dream.  
Fool - Nice to smell, soft incense.  
Lear - Soft incense?  
Cord - Yes Lear! In my dream, soft incense.  
Fool - Nice to hear, breathing air.

Tgthr - Nice to hear, nice to hear.  
 Fool - Nice to see, nice to hear, Dear Lear.  
 Tgthr - Nice to see, nice to hear, Dear Lear.  
 Fool - **[To Lear]** Answer me – Love to dream?  
 Lear - Don't know. No dream, no song to sing.  
 Fool - Now will you dream? Will you sing?  
 Lear - Now? Yes, I shall dream, I shall sing.  
 Cord - **[Aside] [Sings]** *Season of mist and mellow fruitfulness.*  
 Fool - Will you dance?  
 Lear - I will dance, I will dance

Fool - do you wish?  
 Lear - I wish.  
 Fool - Country green?  
 Lear - I wish.  
 Fool - World unseen?  
 Lear - I wish.  
 Fool - Forest dim?  
 Lear - I wish.  
 Fool - In my dream, blushful Hippocrine?  
 Lear - I wish. I wish.  
 Three - I wish, we wish, we wish.  
 Tgthr

Fool - Bravo ! Lear, it will be done.  
 Lear - Finished my TEST?  
 Fool - What did you finish?  
 Cordelia - Nothing, O Fool! She stumbles a bit and fumbles.  
 Fool - Stumbles and fumbles. Good, Good. Sit down. No never sit. Walk, Walk with me.  
 Cordelia - **[Excited]** Shall we play?  
 Fool - We will play.  
 Cordelia - Yes. We will play. Get it Lear? Follow the Fool.  
 Fool - Not Lear. Lear – N – E – D. LEARNED.  
 Cordelia - Not Lear. Lear – N – E – D. LEARNED. Say it?  
 Lear - Not Lear. Lear – N – E – D. LEARNED.

[From now, Lear & Cordelia. Imitates the fool.]

Fool - LEAR – LEAR – LEAR.

Once upon a time there lived King Lear. He divided the map into three. He had three daughters. The one who doth loved him most would get the largest bounty. The eldest two daughter's large speeches approved no deeds. There did not spring any good effects from the words of love. Lear descended in madness after foolishly disposing the estate between two of his three daughters. Nothing came out of nothing and fair was foul, foul was fair.

We all will shun madness, shun madness, and shun madness. Just see... the limitless sky. Let us fly. Let us fly.

Hail – to – the – blithe spirit – Pourest – they – full – heart – unpremeditated – art.  
Cordelia – higher – still higher – like a cloud of fire - Cordelia – Cordelia.

Cordelia - Where are my wrings? Was there any? There was none before. I stumbled when I saw. Now perhaps...O Fool...I have them now perhaps. How to fly ? You gave me wings O Fool and now you say you are tired? Never.

Fool, I loved but was silent. My love was richer than my tongue. I loved my Majesty acCordeliang to my bond, nor more nor less. I could not heave my heart into my mouth. I was true. But my truth was my dower. You, Lear, disclaimed parental care. I was gone forever.

Now I smile – O Fool – I Learnt to dream, I Learnt to sing. I learnt to love the country green, you taught me to see the world unseen taught me to sit beside the Blushful Hippocrene and to have a dream.

A damsel with dulcimer. In a vision once I saw, it was an Abyssinian maid, and on her dulcimer she played. Singing of Mount Abora. Could I revive within me? Her symphony and song to such deep delight it would win me that with music loud and long?

O Fool, dear Fool – does Malvolio, Benvolio fly? How will I fly? Tell me how to fly, O Fool, Tell me how to fly? Lear – Lear – Dear Lear –

Lear - Where did you bring me Cordelia? Where did you bring me? Who is he? Fool – who are you? Is this a playhouse or a waking dream? Do I wake or sleep? Can anybody fly? Can anybody learn to fly? I am MAD...How can I fly? I am a sad-heart. I am alone. Can I ever fly O Fool? Bound upon the wheel of fire can I fly?

You could fly Cordelia....Not much....but somewhat you flew. What about me ? I have no wings. Even if I had wings, I cannot fly. Cordelia, you broke the shackles, you can fly with the words of the Fool, and you can fly. But, how will I?

I know I have killed my beloved daughter. I could give her nothing. My poor fool was hanged. No, No, No, life was there. She shall come to me no more. Never, Never, Never, Never. How do I forget? Heal me O Fool; heal me with your words...Fool...O Fool...Heal me...Heal me. Teach me how to fly – Fool – Teach me how to fly. Fool – Tell me who am I.

Fool – When evening is spread against the sky.  
Music when soft voices die,  
None to go with, you or I.  
Even when your heart aches, and drowsy numbness pains,  
Your sense emptied some dull opiate to the drains.  
Sing, ye bird sing, sing a joyous song,  
Sing the songs of Spring? Aye where are they?

You fear and you run away,  
You fear when the sky turns gray,  
Where are the songs of spring? Aye where are they?

Hail to the Blithe spirit! That from heaven or near it, pourest thy full heart,  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still higher.  
From the earth thou springest.  
Like a cloud of fire.  
The blue deep thou wingest.  
And – singing – still – dost – and soaring – ever – springest.

Hail to the Blithe spirit! That from heaven or near it, pourest thy full heart,  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

In the golden lightening of the sunken sun  
Over which clouds are brightening thou dost float and run.

Hail to the Blithe spirit! That from heaven or near it, pourest thy full heart,  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Like a Poet hidden  
In the light of thought.  
Singing hymns unbidden.  
Till the world is wrought.  
Till the sympathy with hopes and fears it need not.

Nothing to fear, when left alone,  
Fear not when trust not shown.  
No words to bring you near to me,  
Blind with tears and cannot see.  
Trust the wings of Fire against the night,  
Trust the wings fetching light.

Hail to the Blithe spirit! That from heaven or near it, pourest thy full heart,  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Fool – L! Corde – lia! Lee ar – ar!