

Madlyear

**CAST OF CHARACTERS:**

John - (45-65, Male, Any Race) - An actor, Jane's husband

Jane - (35-50, Female, Any Race)- An actress, John's wife

**SETTING:**

A town in the middle of nowhere. The modest home of John and Jane.

AT RISE:

A spotlight on John.

JOHN

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!

Beat. John thinks.

JOHN

I always forget what comes after cocks.

Lights up, and we see John's wife, Jane is also here,  
sitting at a dinner table eating.

JOHN

Well, anyway, you get the idea.

JANE

I've already told you many times, it should have been you. You would have been great.  
So much better than Ted.

JOHN

And yet, Ted is Lear and I am just a spear carrier. Failed again.

JANE

The road to success is paved with failure.

JOHN

The road to failure is also paved with failure. Failure is like Starbucks, it's on every road.  
And yet, I am better than Ted. It is so unjust!

JANE

When you are the director of the play, you can do such unjust things like cast yourself in  
the lead, even though you're thoroughly unqualified.

JOHN

He wouldn't know true talent if it stabbed him in the chest.

JANE

Well, he did cast me.

JOHN

You are wonderful. The perfect Goneril.

JANE

I'm sad there's only a few weeks left in the run. I enjoy playing someone so...

JOHN

Ruthless and amoral.

JANE

I was going to say ambitious and determined.

JOHN

It's a role you were born to play.

JANE

And you are destined to be Lear.

JOHN

(Sadly)

Apparently not.

(Then)

Though, you want to hear something silly? Just this morning on the way to the theater I came across that... psychic shop-

JANE

You didn't? Did you go in again? Get your palm read?

JOHN

I didn't have to this time. I was about to walk passed the door, and the prophetess came out. Boasting of her supernatural knowledge, as she often does.

JANE

(A believer)

What did she say this time?

JOHN

She seemed to imply that I would be Lear.

JANE

She did?

JOHN

Well, at first she said I would be the Duke of Albany strangely-

JANE

Boring.

JOHN

But then she made it clear that I would be the king. I don't even know how she knew I was in the play. Who knows how she performs her magic, if you believe in such a thing.

(Then, obviously lying)

Normally I don't.

JANE

Don't you? I do. I believe in all of that stuff. Crystal balls, Tarot readings, astrology-

JOHN

I don't believe in astrology. But that's only because I'm a Virgo.

(Then)

I have often believed this fortune teller though. Madam Wayward. So old and strangely dressed, yet she knows things about me, it's hard not to believe she's mystical. But how can I trust her this time? The play is half way done. Ted is Lear. He is the lead. Ted is always the lead. It's his company and it's the only game in town for at least 300 miles. He can do what he wants!

(Self-pitying)

It's so discouraging. I'm just a spear carrier. Again. Nothing more.

The phone rings. John picks it up.

JOHN

(On the phone)

Hello? Yes. He did? I understand. Thank you.

He hangs up the phone.

JANE

You know, John, I have to say that I don't like when you talk like that.

JOHN

That was strange.

JANE

Nothing more than a spear carrier? What does that say about me? I can't do better than a spear carrier?

JOHN

I'm not a spear carrier.