

"No, that won't be necessary. I brought Shakespeare yesterday, see? I believe in the best."

"If you so wish. But I'd still suggest you start with a more elementary play."

"Spirit-dampener. That's what you are, early in the morning." But of course.

In the evening, The Wifey looked peeved. Even while I was debating whether to ask her or not, out flew her volley of profanities.

"That skunk. What does he think of himself? Just because he's the director, he thinks he can dictate his terms...?"

At moments like these, it is best not to interrupt her barrage with inane queries of what, when, how, and so on. Such self-generating monologues sustain themselves on the ammunition of displeasure. Simple nods and a few occasional "hmmms" provide the necessary re-fuelling.

"What will he teach me about acting? He doesn't even have the guts to direct a Shakespeare. What does he know about drama? Imagine, walking around with a Samuel something in his hand and then intimidating us with 'not this way', 'with more emotion' and what not. Tell me, how much emotion can you push into a 'No'. But no, he kept on insisting I wasn't good enough. Not good enough, my foot. Who wants to act in a play that has not even proper sentences as dialogues, forget about the complexities of a Shakespeare?"

"But Wifey. You are fortunate he is willing to launch you with a Bec..." But who's listening? And in a way, I'm glad she ignored it because it would have been bad timing.

"Fortunate? You know what he suggested? He said he could consider the role of the tree for me. 'The tree plays a pivotal role here on this bleak landscape' he tried his best to trick me, but I stomped out of there saying, 'I will act only in a Shakespeare and you'd better give me the part of Juliet. Else, the loss is yours.'"

As things stand this morning, The Wifey announced at the breakfast table that she is planning to direct her own play where she (quite naturally) will play the lead role. She said she's already spoken to a few of her friends, and that she wants me to select the play for her. I have politely declined saying reading plays compounds my snoring problems. She said no problem, she understands. Having spent a couple of days in the company of great literary works, she admits her mind is already better attuned to understanding the minds and problems of others.

I nod. Silence is golden. And in the more immediate scheme of things, it ensures a peaceful night's sleep. ■



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