

The Soul of Wit

or

On the Correlation Between Modalities of Schizophrenia and
the Techniques of Kinematograph Performance

Shooting Script
by
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Note: Bold Dialogue indicates direct quotation from Shakespeare.

1 EXT. DRIVEWAY OF MENTAL HOSPITAL - POV FROM A CAR - DAY 1

A car is traveling up a long driveway toward the imposing institutional building.

MAIN TITLES superimposed.

2 INT. LOUNGE KITCHEN - CU HOT WATER TAP - DAY 2

A hand turns on the hot water to full blast and tentatively tests the water temperature with a quick finger.

NEW ANGLE - CLOSE ON HANDS

A white-jacketed doctor's hands carefully measure a spoonful of instant coffee into a cup.

3 INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION DESK - POV ENTERING VISITORS - DAY 3

A SECURITY GUARD is looking up at the camera from his seat at the desk. A huge video monitor behind him flashes images from security cameras around the building: stairwells, corridors, lobbies, etc. A hospital ATTENDANT near the desk speaks directly to the camera.

RECEPTION ATTENDANT

We'll have to check those before he gets them ... We're twenty-four-seven here - suicide watch.

The unseen visitors hand a fruit basket and an ornate silver tray to him and the attendant leaves the frame.

NEW ANGLE - ON VIDEO MONITOR (monitor scenes 3.1,... etc.)

The security image switches from a stairwell (3.1) to a corridor and we see the attendant walking away with the fruit basket and silver tray (3.2) The image switches again and we see a doctor making coffee in a kitchen area (3.3), a lounge area with pool tables (3.4), and finally, another attendant pushing a woman in a wheelchair in another corridor (3.5)

4 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - DAY 4

A different hospital attendant in white pants and shirt, stands next to a woman who is frozen in a catatonic state. She is motionless and her eyes are glazed over.

A second attendant pushes another catatonic woman in a wheelchair, up the ramp, toward the first attendant. A Third Attendant watches him from near the base of the ramp.

SECOND ATTENDANT
Whoever gets furthest, right?

THIRD ATTENDANT
Right... ante up... you go first.

The SECOND ATTENDANT counts out several twenty dollar bills from his pocket and hands them to the THIRD ATTENDANT.

5 INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - DAY 5

It is a bare and unpopulated corridor. Suddenly WILLARD, a thin young man, peers around a corner at the far end. After much paranoid checking in every direction, especially behind him, Willard begins sliding along the corridor wall, slowly, toward the patients lounge, carrying the large gift-wrapped fruit basket and the silver platter, clutched close to his chest. He recoils from an oblivious patient who passes in the hallway without even noticing Willard.

6 INT. LOUNGE KITCHEN - CU STEAMING HOT WATER TAP - DAY 6

The doctor's hand tests the water again and recoils from the heat, then throttles back the steaming tap and fills his coffee cup, stirring it briskly.

6A INT. LOUNGE KITCHEN - CLOSE ON PAPER CUP - DAY 6A

The doctor's hand picks up a small paper cup containing six or eight multi-coloured pills and capsules.

6B INT. LOUNGE KITCHEN - DAY 6B

The relaxed DR. POLON stands by the sink holding what is obviously his own personal coffee cup. He wears a plastic name tag on his white lab coat that says "DR. POLON." He turns off the roaring hot water tap and turns toward the camera with a friendly smile, gulps down his pills, takes a sip of coffee, and walks off.

7 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - DAY

7

The FIRST ATTENDANT stands at the top of the ramp, near the FIRST CATATONIC, watching the SECOND ATTENDANT lift the second catatonic, OPHELIA - an attractive young woman patient - from her wheelchair. He tries to push her down the hallway. Ophelia won't move.

CLOSE ON OPHELIA

Ophelia stands in the hallway, arms at her sides, staring vacantly but with fear deep behind her eyes. She does not react to the Second Attendant who circles her.

NEW ANGLE

The First Attendant struggles with the first catatonic, moving her arms around above her head. Every time he pushes the woman, she freezes in a new grotesque position.

8 INT. LOUNGE - DAY

8

A patient carefully lines up a shot on a pool table containing no balls. He leans over and takes a shot with an imaginary pool cue, then steps back.

REVEALING:

WILLARD slips into the room with much paranoid ritual and sits in an easy-chair in the corner.

New ANGLE

He unwraps his fruit basket on the coffee table and carefully examines a large red apple. He is not distracted by any of the other patients passing in the corridor around him, but stares intently at the apple.

WILLARD

No more this, ha? 'Swounds, I
should bear the winds of us all;
And enterprises of great pith and
moving, how express and admirable!

9 INT. CAFETERIA - VISITORS POV - DAY

9

Dr. Polon smiles and gestures to the visitors to sit at one of the bare plastic tables.

He also sits, sips his tap water brewed coffee, and addresses his off-screen guests, slowly and deliberately. His voice resonates in sync with Willard's off-screen pronouncements.

<p>DR. POLON</p> <p>This madness is my liege, and time and tediousness is majesty and madam, that as well be night, to define the "should be" brevity is mad. But let that go.</p>	<p>WILLARD (V.O.)</p> <p>Remorseless, treacherous, kindless villain! O, vengeance! To be, or not to seed; this quietus makes us rather's brother.</p>
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Dr. Polon sips again from his coffee cup. A female patient sits in a far corner of the room behind him, muttering to herself.

10 INT. LOUNGE - DAY

10

Willard is taking all the fruit from the basket and is carefully moving each piece to a pile on the coffee table. His fruit arrangement seems to be his whole universe. He is oblivious to Dr. Polon's voice which grows louder nearby.

DR. POLON (V.O.)

What duty is day and time,
therefor, to expostulate What duty
is time. My liege, what duty is day
I will end. Mad call ended, this
day, and tediousness, I wit, I wit,
and time.

11 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - DAY

11

The Second Attendant pushes Ophelia from behind. She reacts against him, stepping back. He moves around to face her.

SECOND ATTENDANT

Just want to be difficult, eh?

He nods his head up and down meaning 'yes'; Ophelia nods yes in response, like an automaton. He nods 'no'; Ophelia nods from side to side: 'no.' The First Attendant laughs at him, even though the First Catatonic is still frozen in a grotesque pose and has not moved.

DR. POLON (V.O.)

This the liege, sine true madness
that is well ended. This day, and
madness time. This well I wit, and
madness time.

12 INT. CAFETERIA - DAY 12

DR. POLON

But to expostulate at night, day is
the business, is the soul of will.
My limbs and time. Therefor, to
expostulate my liege, what majesty
should be but madness? This well
ended. Why day is but let liege,
and time.

13 INT. LOUNGE - DAY 13

WILLARD, holds up the fine silver platter and admires his own reflection.

WILLARD

**What a piece of work is man! How
noble in reason! How infinite in
faculties! In form and moving, how
express and admirable! In action
how like an angel! In apprehension,
how like a god! The beauty of the
world! The paragon of animals!**

NEW ANGLE - REFLECTION IN SILVER TRAY

His image recedes in a distorted wide angled reflection.

WILLARD

**And yet, to me, what is this
quintessence of dust?**
(his face looms large in
distorted reflection)
**Man delights not me; no, nor woman
neither.**

14 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - DAY 14

The first catatonic is engaged in purposeless movement of her right arm, although she doesn't seem to be conscious of it. The first attendant smiles broadly and walks slowly around behind her.

NEW ANGLE

The first attendant suddenly gives the first catatonic a violent push and she stumbles forward down the ramp, her upraised arms adding to her momentum as she staggers forward.

The First Attendant follows his catatonic halfway down the corridor and shouts triumphantly back at the second attendant who still stands next to an immobile Ophelia.

FIRST ATTENDANT
Beat that!

NEW ANGLE

The Second Attendant faces the Ophelia, he nudges her, but she stands fast, unmoving.

SECOND ATTENDANT
I shall obey, my lord!

OPHELIA
(no emotion)
I shall obey, my lord.

SECOND ATTENDANT
(smiles, a light bulb
going on in his brain)
Where is the beauteous majesty of
Denmark?

OPHELIA
(flat intonation)
**Where is the beauteous majesty of
Denmark?**

The second attendant stands next to Ophelia and raises his arms in front of him. Ophelia imitates his movements exactly. A wide grin spreads across his face.

SECOND ATTENDANT
O, what a noble mind is here
o'erthrown!

OPHELIA
(no emotion)
**O, what a noble mind is here
o'erthrown.**

He steps forward and Ophelia follows suit. He steps again and she lurches forward again. He walks on leading Ophelia as she totters down the ramp and comes to a halt two meters further down the hall than the first catatonic patient. The Third Attendant steps up and examines the finish line like a referee.

SECOND ATTENDANT
I win. Go again?
(Ophelia echoes him
faintly)

THIRD ATTENDANT

You can't use her! She's not
catatonic.

SECOND ATTENDANT

Yes she is ... Look!

He claps his hands right in front of Ophelia's face. She
doesn't flinch.

SECOND ATTENDANT

Hey no nonny, nonny, hey nonny!

OPHELIA

(without emotion)

Hey no nonny, nonny, hey nonny.

15

INT. LOUNGE - DAY

15

Willard puts down the tray and puzzles over placing fruit in
the odd shaped compartments on the tray. He tries various
combinations, but never seems satisfied. The camera moves
over the platter adding to the dance of his movements.

The insistent ringing of a nearby phone catches Willard's
attention. He examines the phone on his table which is not
ringing and wipes it thoroughly with the bottom of his
hospital gown. He takes the receiver off the hook and listens
intently to the faint dial tone which we hear under Dr.
Polon's loud voice.

DR. POLON (V.O.)

But go. There, What limbs?
Werefince is to flout tediouty
brief. End of wasted night, sour
night, what butward thing night,
is't time? But go.

CLOSE ON WILLARD'S REFLECTION IN THE PLATTER

Willard is really disturbed by the telephone. He listens and
then takes the receiver from his ear and then listens again.
(MORE)

WILLARD

**I have of late, - but wherefore I
know not, - lost all my mirth,
forgone all custom of exercises;
and indeed, it goes so heavily with
my disposition that this goodly
frame, the earth, seems to me a
sterile promontory;**

WILLARD(cont'd)

(pause; angrier)

Answer! I know you're there!

He loses it. He shouts at the phone rather than into it.

16 INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

16

Dr. Polon's voice is cracked and giddy. Willard's voice is loud and overpowering.

WILLARD (V.O.)

... this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire,- why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

DR. POLON

Wherefor, to be night, day is the son, day is, what duty is that duty, since brief. What go. What is night and madness? Why day, night, and tediousness. There nothing true madam, to waste. Night, day is day, and tediousness, What is day and outward flour?

17 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - DAY

17

The Third Attendant is grudgingly counting out twenty dollar bills to pay off the smug second attendant. Ophelia and the other catatonic woman stand by in their new frozen positions.

DR. POLON (V.O.)

This business is night, day is time. Were nothing else but to expostulate what duty is mad. My liege t'were nothing but to define true madam and tediousness is time.

Loud shouting and sharp pounding sounds echo into the ramp corridor. The Third Attendant reacts with guilt and panic in his face, hands the money over and runs off toward the main building. The other attendants turn back to the two catatonics.

17A INT. RECEPTION DESK - DAY

17A

The RECEPTION ATTENDANT hears the distant commotion caused by WILLARD and goes toward the video monitor.

NEW ANGLE - ON SECURITY MONITOR

The monitor switches location and we see the Third Attendant running down a corridor. The Reception Attendant bolts off to his assistance.

18 INT. LOUNGE - DAY

18

Willard is really disturbed. He pounds the phone handset on the table violently in time with his recital of Shakespeare's text.

WILLARD

**Who calls me villain? Breaks my
pate across? Plucks off my beard
and blows it in my face? Tweaks me
by the nose? Gives me the lie i'
the throat As deep as to the lungs?
Who does me this, ha?...**

NEW ANGLE

The third attendant rushes into the lounge to stop Willard. Willard, suddenly calm, hands the phone to the attendant.

WILLARD

It's for you.

The Third Attendant smiles and take the phone just as the Reception Attendant rushes up. Willard ignores them both.

NEW ANGLE

Willard gently places another piece of fruit into his arrangement on the sliver tray. He makes a final adjustment to the pile of fruit and then picks up the tray and walks slowly toward the kitchen area where Dr. Polon can be seen talking.

19 INT. RAMP CORRIDOR - CU OPHELIA - DAY

19

Ophelia's face twitches microscopically. She can't move, but we read her absolute terror and inner turmoil in the tiny movements of her eyes and the subliminal quivering of her facial muscles.

20 INT. CAFETERIA - VISITOR'S POV - DAY

20

(MORE)

DR. POLON

(Straight to Camera)

**This business is well ended. My
liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty
is, Why day is day, night is night,
and time is time. Were nothing but
to waste night, day, and time.**

DR. POLON(cont'd)

Therefore, since brevity is the
soul of wit, And tediousness the
limbs and outward flourishes, I
will be brief. Your noble son is
mad. Mad call I it; for, to define
true madness, What is't but to be
nothing else but mad? But let that
go.

NEW ANGLE - WIDER

Willard pushes past Dr. Polon and shoves the tray of fruit
right into the camera lens. His face looms over it in wide-
angle distortion.

WILLARD

Have some fruit.
(long pause)
It's poison!

His smile which seemed friendly to start, turns sour and
demented.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACTORS NOTES:

The dialogue of WILLARD and DR. POLON, aside from the short actual quotations from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (bold-faced in the script) will be improvised continuously using text generated by Hugh Kenner's "TRAVESTY" software. The speeches shown here are approximations. The actors all manifest clinical symptoms of various types of schizophrenia:

Dr. Polon = Hebephrenic - The mood is shallow and inappropriate and often accompanied by giggling or self-satisfied, self-absorbed smiling, or by a lofty manner, grimaces, mannerisms, pranks, hypochondriacal complaints, and reiterated phrases. Thought is disorganized and speech rambling and incoherent. There is a tendency to remain solitary, and behaviour seems empty of purpose and feeling.

Willard = Paranoid - delusions of persecution, reference, exalted birth, special mission, bodily change, or jealousy; hallucinatory voices that threaten the patient or give commands, or auditory hallucinations without verbal form, such as whistling, humming, or laughing; hallucinations of smell or taste, or of sexual or other bodily sensations; visual hallucinations may occur but are rarely predominant.

Ophelia = Catatonic - Prominent psychomotor disturbances are essential and dominant features and may alternate between extremes such as hyperkinesis and stupor, or automatic obedience and negativism. Constrained attitudes and postures may be maintained for long periods. Episodes of violent excitement may be a striking feature of the condition.

The schizophrenic disorders are characterized in general by fundamental distortions of thinking and perception, and by inappropriate or blunted affect. Clear consciousness and intellectual capacity are usually maintained. The disturbance involves the most basic functions that give the normal person a feeling of individuality, uniqueness, and self-direction. The most intimate thoughts, feelings, and acts are often felt to be known to or shared by others, and explanatory delusions may develop, to the effect that natural or supernatural forces are at work to influence the afflicted individual's thoughts and actions in ways that are often bizarre. The individual may see himself or herself as the pivot of all that happens. Hallucinations, especially auditory, are common and may comment on the individual's behaviour or thoughts. Perception is frequently disturbed in other ways: colours or sounds may seem unduly vivid or altered in quality, and irrelevant features of ordinary things may appear more important than the whole object or situation. Perplexity is also common early on and frequently leads to a belief that everyday situations possess a special, usually sinister, meaning intended uniquely for the individual.