

~~all eternity. But I still don't have all day. (Andrew begins again. After a few lunges, he begins to speak. His forehead is furrowed with intensity; his speech patterns are reminiscent of a Brooklyn tough guy, in the Brando/deNiro mode.)~~

ANDREW. To be ... nah. (He paces. A thought occurs.) Or ... not ... to ... be. That, *that* is the question. Whoa. Whether ... (He holds up a hand.) Whether 'tis nobler ... huh ... in the mind, right ...

BARRYMORE. Wrong.

ANDREW. What?

BARRYMORE. No.

ANDREW. What "No?"

BARRYMORE. No.

ANDREW. No, what? No you disagree with my interpretation, no my interpretation wasn't clear, no you think I'm totally horrible?

BARRYMORE. Yes.

ANDREW. I'm horrible?

BARRYMORE. At the moment. What were you doing?

ANDREW. I was internalizing the role. I was finding an emotional through-line.

BARRYMORE. Why?

ANDREW. Why? So the character will come alive! So I'll achieve some sort of truth! (Barrymore rises, aghast.)

BARRYMORE. Truth! Your performance — the pauses, the moans, all that you clearly consider invaluable — it's utterly appalling. We must never confuse truth with asthma.

ANDREW. What?

BARRYMORE. I understand the impulse, God help me, I lived just long enough for the introduction of truth into the modern theater. As I recall, it accompanied synthetic fibers and the GE Kitchen Of Tomorrow.

ANDREW. Oh — so you just want me to ham it up.

BARRYMORE. I beg your pardon?

ANDREW. Hamming. Mugging. Over the top. Too big. Too ...

BARRYMORE. (With a grand gesture.) Barrymore?

ANDREW. Well, you did have that reputation. As someone

... larger than life.

BARRYMORE. What size would you prefer? Gesture, passion — these are an actor's tools. Abandon them, and the result? Mere reality. Employ them, with gusto, and an artist's finesse, and the theater resounds! I do not overact. I simply possess the emotional resources of ten men. I am not a ham; I'm a crowd! Andrew, who is Hamlet?

ANDREW. A prince?

BARRYMORE. A star.

ANDREW. What?

BARRYMORE. A star. The role is a challenge, but far more — an opportunity. To shine. To rule. To seduce. To wit — what makes a star?

ANDREW. Talent? *(They exchange a look.)* Sorry, I wasn't thinking.

BARRYMORE. A thrilling vocal range? Decades of training? The proper vehicle? *(He shakes his head, no.)* Tights.

ANDREW. Tights?

BARRYMORE. Tights. Where are you looking? Right now?

ANDREW. I am not!

BARRYMORE. Of course you are! The potato, the cucumber, the rolled sock — this is the history of Prince Hamlet.

ANDREW. You mean — you padded yourself?

BARRYMORE. Unnecessary. Even for the balcony. *(Pause, as he gazes upward.)* The second balcony.

ANDREW. So Hamlet should be ... horny?

BARRYMORE. Hamlet is a young man, a college boy, at his sexual peak. Hamlet is pure hormone. Ophelia enters, that most beguiling of maidens. Chastity is discussed.

ANDREW. Please, don't joke. Not about chastity.

BARRYMORE. Why? What?

ANDREW. I can't talk about it.

BARRYMORE. Oh dear. Your beloved? A problem?

ANDREW. A nightmare. Five months.

BARRYMORE. What?

ANDREW. Nothing.

BARRYMORE. Truly?

ANDREW. Necking at the Cloisters. Picnics on Amish quilts.