

THE UNDERSTUDY BY THERESA REBECK (PG 18-20)

ROXANNE

What are you, a fucking moron?

HARRY

I think i'm well within my rights-

ROXANNE

You have no rights! You're an actor! You're not even an actor, you're an understudy.

HARRY

Okay. Okay.

ROXANNE

You listen to me. You moron- (*A pause, suddenly losing it.*) Why did they cast you?! Why did they have to cast YOU?! Why didn't I see this coming?! Why did I have no warning?! SHIT. What on earth can the universe be trying to teach me, by having you, YOU, show up? Don't answer that. Do not say anything.

It will be very bad for you, very bad, if you even try to have a conversation with me. Do you understand that?

HARRY

Okay obviously there's still some bad feelings around this.

ROXANNE

(*Getting a grip*)

No. No bad feelings. You are out of my system. I'm over you. Okay? Okay? Okay?

HARRY

I just-

ROXANNE

No.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

Going to, um- leaving, in general-

ROXANNE

Harry I will hurt you.

HARRY

Was perhaps drastic. That's all I will say.

ROXANNE

Fantastic. (*A breath.*) Okay. Now that we've got that squared away, can I ask you something?

HARRY

Sure.

ROXANNE

Are you a fucking moron? Do you think it's really a good idea to piss off the star of the show you're in rehearsal for, as an understudy, within the first ten minutes of rehearsal?

HARRY

I thought "Bruce" was the star.

ROXANNE

They're both stars, Harry. Jake's movie did sixty-seven million dollars worth of business on its opening weekend.

HARRY

Did you see it though? God it was awful.

ROXANNE

I didn't see it.

HARRY

Hilarious. "Get in the truck! Get down, get down!" Sixty-seven million dollars?

ROXANNE

That's right, sixty-seven million dollars.

HARRY

Well, I don't care how much money it made. It's awful. And he's terrible in it!

ROXANNE

As your stage manager i'm going to have to ask you to keep your opinions about popular culture to yourself.

HARRY

Whatever.

ROXANNE

No. Don't say "whatever." Say, "I will keep my opinions about popular culture to myself, Roxanne."

HARRY

I will keep my opinions about popular culture to myself, Roxanne.

ROXANNE

And do you think you can just do the scene the way it's written?

HARRY

Well, it's not actually written that he takes a drink. You know that is not, Kafka did not write that.

ROXANNE

Kafka's dead! We got a dead playwright here and a live movie star so if the movie star says that it is in the script that you drink before you move? That is what it says in the script.

HARRY

Well, I-

ROXANNE

No. No "well!" Just "Yes, Roxanne!"

HARRY

So what you're saying is there's no creativity, there's no-

ROXANNE

What i'm saying is, you will do what I tell you to do, or I will call my producers right now on this cell phone right here in my hand, and tell them that you are not working out.

HARRY

Well that's seems extreme.

ROXANNE

That's right it is extreme and I'll do it you lunatic!

HARRY

And it's not about...

ROXANNE

About what? About what, Harry?

HARRY

There's no...

ROXANNE

No what? "Baggage?" "Bad feelings about the past?" "Residual impulses to take revenge on the shithead who broke my heart?" There might be.

Who can say. And you know what? If you do lose your job here, because you finally really piss me off, and those vague residual impulses get the better of me? You can run around New York and tell our mutual friends that I had you fired, because I wasn't over you,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROXANNE (cont'd)

you can say whatever you want, but
you know what? You'll STILL BE OUT
OF A JOB.

HARRY

All right! I'll take the stupid
drink. I didn't know it was so
important to everyone.

ROXANNE

Okay good.