

murder, feigns madness. To perfect the pose, he must spurn his beloved, the fair Ophelia. She is undone.

ANDREW. But doesn't she kill herself? I don't want to hurt Deirdre.

BARRYMORE. You'll be merciful.

ANDREW. No, that would be dishonest.

BARRYMORE. You would prefer, perhaps, some form of therapy? Continued discussion? What is the present-day epithet — "communication?" That absolute assassin of romance? *(The door to the roof swings open. Deirdre enters, in a long, Victorian, white cotton nightgown, carrying a book. Deirdre will not be able to see Barrymore. Spotting Deirdre; aglow.)* Ahh!

DEIRDRE. Andrew?

ANDREW. *(Surprised.)* Deirdre.

BARRYMORE. *(Gazing at Deirdre, appreciatively.)* Darling.

DEIRDRE. Who were you talking to? *(Andrew turns to Barrymore.)*

BARRYMORE. No. She has no need to see me.

ANDREW. *(To Deirdre.)* No one. I was just ... running my lines. The soliloquies.

DEIRDRE. I've been reading your Barrymore book. He was incredible.

BARRYMORE. Nymph.

DEIRDRE. But his life — it was so tragic. Did you know, he was a major alcoholic. Toward the end, when he couldn't find liquor, he would drink cleaning fluid.

BARRYMORE. A black lie!

DEIRDRE. And perfume.

BARRYMORE. As a chaser.

DEIRDRE. I mean, he was magnificent, but he was married four times.

BARRYMORE. I was?

DEIRDRE. He would fall madly in love with these women, and then he'd become insanely jealous. And then he'd cheat on them. Andrew — I want you to promise me something. I know that Barrymore is your hero, and that we should all worship him, but please — promise me you'll never be anything like him. *(Andrew stands at C., midway between Deirdre and*

Barrymore. Deirdre takes Andrew's hand.) Do you promise?
(Barrymore takes Andrew's other hand.)
BARRYMORE. *(Beseechingly.)* Swear it.
ANDREW. Deirdre — maybe Barrymore wasn't so bad.
BARRYMORE. Maybe?
ANDREW. I mean, he was very talented, and I'm sure he had a few ...
BARRYMORE. Sterling attributes?
ANDREW. Good days. *(Deirdre is now seated, paging through the Barrymore book.)*
DEIRDRE. Oh, no. He was ... well, do you know, the first time he had sex, he was only fourteen?
BARRYMORE. Which book is this?
DEIRDRE. With his own stepmother. Can you imagine?
BARRYMORE. I'm a Freudian bonus coupon.
DEIRDRE. And after that, there was no stopping him, he must have been with every woman in New York. He was a matinee idol, before he did *Hamlet*. He starred in these trashy plays, and women would swoon, right in the aisles. There are these pictures of him ... *(She holds open the book.)* from when he was young. He was so ... cool.
ANDREW. Deirdre?
DEIRDRE. Look at this picture — it's him rejecting Ophelia. See, he wore all black, sort of open at the neck. And tights. *(Barrymore is delighted.)*
ANDREW. *(To Barrymore.)* Shut up!
DEIRDRE. *(Thinking Andrew was speaking to her.)* What? What do you mean? Oh, I get it. You're treating me the way Hamlet treats Ophelia. Andrew, do you think Hamlet slept with Ophelia?
BARRYMORE. Only in the Chicago company.
ANDREW. *(To Barrymore.)* Shut up!
DEIRDRE. *(Almost swooning.)* Oh, Andrew. Hamlet's so mean to Ophelia. He says, "Get thee to a nunnery." A nunnery! Oh, if you said that to me ... I'd die.
ANDREW. *(To Barrymore.)* I'm not kidding.
DEIRDRE. Oh Andrew, say it. Like in the play.
ANDREW. What? Get thee to a nunnery?

DEIRDRE. No — like Barrymore!

BARRYMORE. *(With tremendous authority.)* Barrymore. Begin!
(Barrymore begins another lesson. He gazes at Deirdre, and lightly strokes her face. Ghostly music. He turns away. He motions for Andrew to do the same. Andrew gazes at Deirdre, and strokes her face. No music. Andrew's actions are perfunctory; he tries not to participate. He gestures — "See? It didn't work."

DEIRDRE. *(Very disappointed.)* Andrew ... *(Barrymore is outraged at Andrew's lack of cooperation.)*

BARRYMORE. *(Howling.)* GET THEE ... *(Andrew is shocked by Barrymore's roar; he moves into action, also at fever pitch.)*

ANDREW. TO A NUNNERY! *(Deirdre is shocked and thrilled at this new Andrew.)*

DEIRDRE. Yes!

BARRYMORE. *(Still very passionate.)* Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? *(Andrew has grabbed the copy of Hamlet; he hurries after Barrymore. Together they stalk Deirdre, with great sensual intensity.)*

ANDREW. I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things ...

BARRYMORE. Pause. Consider. Destroy!

ANDREW. *(With enormous authority.)* ... that it were better my mother had not born me!

DEIRDRE. No!

ANDREW. I am very proud ...

BARRYMORE. Revengeful ...

ANDREW. With more offenses at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in ...

DEIRDRE. *(Backing around the couch.)* Andrew, this is making me very nervous ...

ANDREW. Imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in! *(Andrew takes Deirdre in his arms; they embrace and kiss with wild abandon. Barrymore stands nearby, urging them on and enjoying the spectacle.)*

BARRYMORE. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all, believe none of us! *(Andrew literally sweeps Deirdre off her feet. He carries her to the couch.)*