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Drama Department Lounge

Collaboration

The collaborative atmosphere in the Cornell Drama Department lounge invigorated the work group participants. The conclusion of casting for the school's production of *Hamlet* seemed imminent.

Will, set to perform the role of Horatio, sat behind a desk, preparing to read from the full script to a candidate as he auditioned for the lead. Joan, having already secured the part of Ophelia, sat to Will's left, anxiously awaiting the exchange of lines. Director Frank Reynolds, perched on the desk's front edge, coached the prospective thespian, encouragingly.

“In this scene, Hamlet has just informed his friend Horatio about his encounter with the ghost of his murdered father. Horatio, ever the loyal companion, is still taken aback by Hamlet’s strange behavior. Hamlet, not one to receive criticism easily, responds. So, Chris, as Hamlet, you need to project an air of irritation when delivering your line. But not too forcefully, as you still want to win over Horatio’s acceptance of the strange events with the afterlife that you have just experienced. Will, go ahead and deliver Horatio’s line, and let’s see how Chris does.”

“Sure thing, Professor Reynolds - ‘O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!’”

Chris’s boyish face hardened. His features taking on a visage of chiseled stone. “There are more things than Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in *your* philosophy.”

Joan gasped. Professor Reynolds looked intently at the young man, pausing for dramatic effect.

“Man, that was SUPER Chris! In fact Mr. Reeve, I predict you’re going to be a super *star*!”

The actor would go on to play opposite Katherine Hepburn on Broadway the following year. An agent would see the performance, and remember him when the time came in 1978 to cast the role of *Superman: the Movie*.

His performance would forever be ranked as the best portrayal of the iconic superhero.

Ideas:

- Working on a college play. Full script in binder in Will's, co-lead actor's (Horatio), hands. Helping read lines for lead actor, Hamlet.
- Female, Joan, playing Ophelia, to Will's left has notes and is listening to Director coaching lead actor.
- Young man, lead actor, with back to viewer has part of script
- Director, Frank sitting on desk is trying to evoke more emotion out of lead actor. Model of set is on desk.

Christopher Reeve H.S. class of 1970, fits profile of main actor. Superman released 1978. Reeve went to Cornell and then Juilliard. Reeve had soap opera role in 1974 on Love of Life and was in play with Katherine Hepburn at the same time.

Hamlet

Will (Horatio): O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!"

Hamlet: "There are more things than Heaven and Earth,
Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Man, that was SUPER Chris! In fact Mr. Reeve, I predict you're
going to be a superstar!
