

TOOTSIE
GEORGE & MICHAEL

INT: GEORGE GREY'S OFFICE

George Grey is around 50, impeccably dressed, talking on the phone. As Michael enters:

GEORGE

(into phone)
Hold on a second.
(pushes hold)
Michael, can you wait outside,
please? I'm talking to the Coast.

MICHAEL

This is a coast, too, George. New
York is a coast!

GEORGE

Wait a minute.
(releases "hold" then, into phone)
Sy, listen —(beat) Sy?
(into intercom)
Margret, get him back, will you? I
cut myself off.

MICHAEL

Terry Bishop is doing "Iceman
Cometh." Why didn't you send me up
for that, George? You're my agent
too.

GEORGE

Stuart Pressman wanted a name.

MICHAEL

Terry Bishop is a name?

GEORGE

No. Michael Dorsey is a name.
When you want to send a steak
back, Michael Dorsey is a name.
Excuse me. Why do you make me say
things like that? That was a rotten
thing to say. Let me start again.

Babcock Studios
Scene used for educational purposes.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Terry Bishop is on a "soap." Millions of people watch him. He's known.

MICHAEL

And that qualifies him to ruin "Iceman Cometh?"

GEORGE

Look, I can't have this conversation.

MICHAEL

I can act circles around that guy. I've played that part!

GEORGE

If Stuart Pressman wants a name, that's his affair. I know this will disgust you, but a lot of people are in this business to make money.

MICHAEL

Don't make me sound like some flake, George, I want to make money, too.

GEORGE

Oh, really? The Harlem Theatre for The Blind? Strindberg in the park? The People's Workshop in Syracuse?

MICH.AEL

I did eight plays in nine months in Syracuse! And I got great reviews from New York critics! Not that that's why I did it!

GEORGE

-- No, of course not. God forbid you should lose your standing as an underground cult failure.

MICHAEL

(gently)
Do you think I'm a failure, George?

GEORGE

I will not get sucked into this discussion! I am too old, too smart, and too successful!

MICHAEL

(goes close to desk)

I sent you Jeff's play to read. It's got a great part for me in it. Did you read it?

GEORGE

Where do you come off sending me your roommate's play that you want to star in?

I'm your agent not your mother.

I'm not supposed to produce your roommate's play so you can star in it. I'm supposed to field offers.

MICHAEL

Who told you that? The agent-fairy? That was a significant play!

GEORGE

Nobody wants to do that play!

MICHAEL

Why?

GEORGE

Because it's a downer! No one is going to produce a play about a couple who move back to Love Canal!

MICHAEL

But that actually happened!

GEORGE

Who gives a shit! Nobody wants to pay \$20 to watch people living next to chemical wastes! They can see that in New Jersey!

MICHAEL

Ok, Ok, I don't want to argue about this now, I'll raise the money myself!
I'll do anything! Send me up for cat commercials, dog commercials, voice-overs, anything!

GEORGE

But I can't send you.

MICHAEL

Why?

GEORGE

Michael, no one wants to work with you.

MICHAEL

That's not true! I bust my ass to get a part right!

GEORGE

Yes, but you bust everyone else's ass too. A guy's got four weeks to put on a play -- he doesn't want to argue about whether Tolstoy can walk if he's dying.

MICHAEL

The guy was an idiot. That was 2 years ago.

GEORGE

They can't all be idiots. That's the last time you worked! You argue with everyone. You've got one of the worst reputations in town. Nobody will touch you.

MICHAEL

Wait a minute now...what are you saying? That nobody in New, York will work with me?

GEORGE

No. That's too limiting. How about no one in Hollywood will work with you either. I can't even send you up for a commercial. You played a tomato for 30 seconds and they went a half day over because you wouldn't sit down! (because you didn't agree with the blocking!)

MICHAEL

It wasn't logical.

GEORGE

You were a tomato! A tomato doesn't have logical blocking! A tomato can't move.

MICHAEL

That's what I said! So if a tomato can't move, how can it sit down?! I was a great tomato! I was a stand-up tomato!

GEORGE

Michael ... Michael ... You're a brilliant actor. But there's nothing I can do for you. I think you ought to get some therapy.

MICHAEL

(quietly determined)
-- George, I'm going to raise \$8,000 and I'm going to do Jeff's play.

GEORGE

(shaking his head)
Michael, you haven't been listening. You're not going to raise .25¢ (slowly)
No one will hire you.

MICHAEL

Oh yeah?