



Here's David at twelve years of age, with his step brother Shaun... Oh those haircuts!!

cigarettes, that chick's coffee. And I guess I must've been the Gofor-In-Chief on the New York scene at that time.

"There was only one really big advantage in the job and that was the fact that I was always being sent out of the office on messages. Of course, I'd picked a firm that was pitched right by the Broadway theatres, which meant that I could check out their boards to see if there were any auditions going that day, and sometimes even get to do an audition in working hours!"

That way David managed to fit in quite a few auditions during the first couple of months of his time in the big city. But something that he had not bargained for was the vast numbers of other guys who were doing exactly the same thing! He'd grown used to the endless queues of hopefuls waiting on auditions and screen tests back in Hollywood. But somehow he'd assumed that it would be different in New York:

### High Hopes

"When I'd heard tell of all these big spectacles closing after a few nights, and new ones springing up to take over from them, it seemed kinda natural to expect that there'd be lots of roles going for actors... And, of course, I always imagined myself being cast in the one production that didn't fold!"

Well, it took David just no time at all to realise that this was NOT the way it was going to be!

He started out by putting himself on the books of several agents, thinking that one or other of them would call him to read for parts.

David waited to hear from his agents and, for most of the time all he heard was... silence! Meanwhile, every day without news felt like a week, and every week seemed more like a long, long month.

That was when David decided to start attending open auditions. The general idea is that the promoter of a show puts out an announcement about the sort of actors his production needs and will be auditioning for. You get classes like

male or female juvenile, character, or straight middle-aged... some for musicals, some for comedy, so that each actor can decide whether the part sounds as though it might be suitable for him.

### Auditions

David used to go along for any juvenile male calls and for any musical auditions that were billed. What happened was that a notice about the auditions was put up outside the theatre during the day and, if you were interested, you just joined the long queue...

"It used to be an awful long wait for one big disappointment after another," David recalls, and at first his repeated failures used to depress him intensely.

"There'd be times when I'd just walk out onto the stage and this voice from out front would shout out: 'Name!' and I'd give it to him, straining my eyes to pick him out in the semi-darkness of the auditorium. And then he'd come back with: 'Okay, we'll call you'. And that would be that!! I used to reckon that the least they could do was see me at before they turned me down flat!"

But gradually David began to realise that this cycle of waiting, audition, refusal was a complete way of life for thousands of guys like himself. In fact, the Broadway audition system provided something like a club for out-of-work actors. The hard-core regulars got to know one another and exchanged news about other auditions they'd been to or were heading for... they'd go for a cup of coffee together afterwards and chat about the parts they'd played and, more important, the roles they dreamed of playing... and they'd pass round a last cigarette if friends who were broke didn't have any.

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