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➤ She describes the business as “still a bit foreign to me”, calls herself “a type-A control freak” and confesses an attraction to “the dark side”. Empire enjoys a rare audience with **Michelle Pfeiffer**

YOU CAN'T HELP BUT EXPECT MICHELLE PFEIFFER TO BE RATHER IMPERIOUS. PARTLY, IT'S HOW SHE LOOKS — LIKE SOMEONE FROM GREEK MYTH: AN IMPROBABLE ARRANGEMENT OF

flawless bone structure, blonde curls and glacial eyes. Partly it's the fact that despite being one of the biggest female stars of the past few decades, she remains relatively inscrutable. She has done surprisingly few interviews and a great majority of those remark on how she gives little away. She lives outside Los Angeles on a ranch in northern California, and rarely strays anywhere photographers might lurk. But mainly it's down to the parts she plays. Whether it's Susie Diamond in *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, Elvira Hancock in

Scarface or Selina Kyle/Catwoman in *Batman Returns*, Pfeiffer is at her most arresting playing women who've had enough of dealing with crap. She's played the softer innocents — Madame Marie de Tourvel in *Dangerous Liaisons*, Sukie in *The Witches Of Eastwick* — but it's the fighters who endure.

Yet when we speak on the phone — she sitting in an office in her home, occasionally interrupted by family knocking on the door — she's friendly and open. A question will occasionally elicit a long pause or an "I don't remember", but there's no sense of chipping through a wall that can come with talking to actors who've seen Hollywood change from a place where stars are mysterious beings by which to be



Married to the Mob in *Scarface*.

dazzled to a paparazzi rat run where falling out of clubs and showing your pants is as newsworthy as a number one movie.

Her relaxed mood is perhaps because the reason we're speaking is the release of a movie about which she feels "extremely comfortable". Based on a rickety '60s soap opera, Dark Shadows is her reunion with Tim Burton, the director who made her the defining Catwoman exactly 20 years ago. This time she's in looser get-up as the beleaguered matriarch of a family with problems both emotional and supernatural. Johnny Depp is an 18th century man turned into a vampire and sealed in a coffin to wake 220 years later; Pfeiffer is his distant relative now holding the crumbling family together. It's her biggest project since she returned to acting after a four-year break from 2003 to 2007, and a role she pursued on account of her love for the original series. She may have generally excellent taste in movie roles, but she has terrible taste in TV...

EMPIRE: Tim Burton says you called him when you knew he was making Dark Shadows because you're a big fan of the original series. So firstly, why on earth are you a big fan of the original series?

PFEIFFER: Well, I was quite young. And I'm not the only one.

I run into people now all the time — mostly women — who tell me they too were obsessed with Dark Shadows when they were small ☹. It was a little bit naughty, a little bit taboo, a little bit dark, a little bit sexy... It was rather racy for afternoon TV — it was soap opera. It was the first vampire show I remember, and vampires have always been, and still are, kind of sexy. I don't know why. But as a young girl — I think I was about eight — I found it quite scary.

EMPIRE: It's not known in the UK but it's on YouTube. It doesn't seem to have aged well. A lot of poor effects.

PFEIFFER: Oh, the paper bats flapping around! But once you realise it was all live and they didn't have any special effects to speak of, then you sort of forgive them some of the more dated elements. I got every bit as obsessed making the film as I had been when I was a kid. We had all the DVDs from the various seasons and we watched it every morning religiously. It was the most fun I've ever had getting ready for any movie.

EMPIRE: Tim says that to keep the flavour of the original series you have to achieve a style of acting that's verging on bad. How do you aim for bad acting?

PFEIFFER: It was always this




Notes

☹ Dark Shadows aired weekdays on the ABC network from 1966 to 1971. It is available on DVD if you are a fan of things that are really quite bad.

discussion of, “Just how Dark Shadows am I today?” But you still have to keep it grounded and somewhat based in reality.

EMPIRE: So there’s a Dark Shadows scale?

PFEIFFER: Oh yes. What’s hard is when you’re really teetering on the edge of being really bad, which is when it’s near impossible to do a take without breaking up at the other actors. Tim would ruin many takes by laughing off-camera. That’s when you know you’re comfortable with

a few months before that I was in the car with my husband  and we were talking about all the old television series that they were now making into movies and I said, “God, someone should make Dark Shadows.” Then a short while later I read that Tim was going to make it with Johnny Depp. I didn’t do anything at first. Eventually I worked up the courage to call him and I was very apologetic. I didn’t want him to feel obligated but I told him

“Tim Burton would ruin many takes by laughing off-camera”

your director, when you’re not upset by him laughing at you.

EMPIRE: Why did you call Tim about this project? He says it’s something you never usually do.

PFEIFFER: I can count maybe two or three times before in my life. I was really uncomfortable doing it and I don’t think I would have done it had I not known him. I was working with a mutual friend of ours who kept encouraging me to call. It just seemed a bit like it was meant to be. Just

I was a huge fan and I would love to do it if he was making it. Then a long time went by and he didn’t make any commitments. He didn’t know what it would be and whether there would be anything for me.


I think actually a year went by and I didn’t think it would ever happen. But then it did.

EMPIRE: Had you spoken to Tim in the 20 years since you worked on Batman Returns?

PFEIFFER: No, I don’t think I had.

EMPIRE: So what was that conversation like?



 Pfeiffer has been married to David E. Kelley, creator of TV shows including Chicago Hope, Ally McBeal and Boston Legal, since 1993. They have two children: an adopted daughter, Claudia Rose, and a son, John Henry.



Working her magic with Cher and Sarandon in *The Witches Of Eastwick*

PFEIFFER: He was so lovely. He was the same Tim. I always feel comfortable with him because we have very similar backgrounds — we grew up in similar neighbourhoods and obviously watched the same TV shows.

EMPIRE: Was there any change in him?

PFEIFFER: He kept saying to me, “Am I different? Am I different at all? I’m less intense, right?” No. He’s every bit as intense as he was. He’s clearly happier. He’s got this amazing partner and beautiful children. He’s still a lot of fun on the set.

EMPIRE: Was working together on *Batman Returns* a happy experience? Those big movies with lots of complicated costumes and sequences tend to be trying.

PFEIFFER: It was very happy, but completely exhausting. I think just because of the physicality of

it all. Not only the shooting, but also there’s a tremendous amount of training that went into it because it was such a physical role. Then, of course, the costume was *a lot* to have to live in for a long shoot. You had to get into it in the morning — which was a process, let me tell you — and then live in it all day. It wasn’t the most comfortable but it was so worth it. And it was a long shoot. We were shooting in, I think, the middle of summer and they air-conditioned the stage to a really low temperature so you could see our breath. It was freezing. You’d walk outside and it was 110 degrees in Burbank and then you’d come on set and everyone was wrapped up in parkas. How we didn’t all get sick I don’t even know. Danny (*De Vito*) was happy as a clam because he was in that big penguin suit, so he was just toasty. I was in this thin rubber catsuit, freezing my little tail off.

EMPIRE: With Danny in padding, you in thin rubber and Michael Keaton in thick rubber, there can’t have been a single time where everyone was comfortable?

PFEIFFER: No, and I don’t imagine Danny was all that comfortable under all those prosthetics. Now that I’ve done prosthetics ③, which I hadn’t at that point, I know how uncomfortable they are to be in. I’d rather be cold in a rubber suit than have stuff glued to my face.

EMPIRE: Catwoman is one of the defining

③ Pfeiffer underwent significant prosthetic make-up to age her to approximately 5,000 years for her role as the witch Lamia in 2007’s *Stardust*.

roles of your career. Did you say yes to her immediately?

PFEIFFER: Immediately. I was halfway through the script when I said yes. Someone else was cast in the part and I remember being absolutely devastated and calling my agent and saying, “How have I not had a meeting about this? Why have I not heard about it?” It was one of those things where Tim had someone in mind and went directly to them ④. So I was really bummed, but it was okay. When she fell out of it I was just leaving the country

she was one of my childhood fantasies.

EMPIRE: Based on the comics or TV? Who was your Catwoman?

PFEIFFER: I think Julie Newmar was my Catwoman.

EMPIRE: It was left open at the end of that film for Catwoman to return. What discussion was there about reprising the role?

PFEIFFER: Oh, very little. For a while, like a really brief time, Tim was interested in maybe doing a Catwoman movie, but that didn't really last very long.

“Dark characters are always more interesting. Catwoman’s very dark”

and got a call to say Tim wanted to meet me. So I went and he gave me the script and I got halfway through and said yes. But you know, honestly, I would have done it anyway, even without reading the script. But I was very happy that she was actually very well written.

EMPIRE: What was the most attractive aspect for you?

PFEIFFER: I think that she was someone so dark. Dark characters are always more interesting and she's really very dark. That whole split personality is interesting. Also,

EMPIRE: What are your feelings about Anne Hathaway now playing her in *The Dark Knight Rises*?

PFEIFFER: Oh, I think she's great. I'm actually very much looking forward to seeing her in the role. I'm a big fan of hers and I think she has everything you need for that role. She has the humour, she can go to dark places, she's obviously very talented. I think she's going to be really good.

EMPIRE: What do you think of Christopher Nolan's take on the Batman universe?



④ Annette Bening was originally signed for the role, Burton having seen her in *The Grifters*, but she had to drop out when she became pregnant.

PFEIFFER: I love it. It's very different to Tim's but I'm a fan.

EMPIRE: So you're not protective of a role that has become defined by your performance?

PFEIFFER: Oh no. Halle Berry did it already. It's fine. The whole thing with Batman is that they're always changing the world with each director. I would have loved to have done it but I know that's not

PFEIFFER: I think so.

EMPIRE: What was the last film of yours you watched?

PFEIFFER: Oh, it would be *People Like Us* ❸.

EMPIRE: But which from your past?

PFEIFFER: Oh! Oh God, I never watch my movies. Ever. *Ever*. Actually, I'm lying, I did see a bit of one recently when I was channel surfing. I stumbled on *Married To The Mob*. I was sitting with my kids and



Rocking Rydell High in *Grease 2*; earning her second of three Oscar noms in *The Fabulous Baker Boys*



really what the franchise is about now.

EMPIRE: You mean you would have loved to be Catwoman in Christopher Nolan's world?

PFEIFFER: Oh sure. I definitely would have done it.

EMPIRE: That could have been interesting.

they're older now and I knew they hadn't seen it, so I thought they might actually like it — they don't always like all my movies; they're tough critics. But I thought they might actually enjoy this one, so we kept it on for a while, but then I couldn't watch anymore.



❸ In *People Like Us* (yet to receive a UK release date), Pfeiffer plays the mother of Chris Pine's character, a man tasked with giving his late father's fortune to the sister he never knew.

EMPIRE: That's a good one. I reckon that's one of your best.

PFEIFFER: Well thank you. It's funny, because I always think I'm so bad. But now so much time has gone by, 20 years or whatever, and I could look at it and think, "You know what, you're not so bad in this. You're not terrible." It is a good one, I think. I had a great time on that with Jonathan Demme.

EMPIRE: I've read that when you started you felt it took a while to learn to act.

It's made the whole process so much better. I'm excited to see this movie, but I have no excitement about seeing myself.

EMPIRE: You mentioned the hiatus there. How much of that decision was about wanting a break from working and how much was about getting out of LA?

PFEIFFER: Subconsciously, I think I must have wanted a break, otherwise I wouldn't have taken so long off. I was still reading things but there was a lot going on with moving and that was a much bigger

"You used to know who all the players were. It was all clear-cut. That's taken some getting used to"

When did you think you were okay?

PFEIFFER: Probably just at the time that everyone else started saying I was bad (*laughs*). Not *everyone*. I'm just joking. No, I don't think I've gotten there yet. Actually, I would say that in the last three years or so, ever since I had that long hiatus where I didn't work, I've enjoyed the process a lot more. It may be that I'm watching myself less. I used to watch dailies all the time and I just don't do it anymore. I might if it's something I'm really worried about. I didn't see any footage on *Dark Shadows* at all. I think I've just reached the point where I don't want to torture myself anymore.

undertaking than I imagined.

EMPIRE: Was there a turning point where you realised you just had to leave?

PFEIFFER: No. We'd always talked about wanting to live outside LA and then spent a few years looking for a house that would fit all our criteria and probably didn't exist — that old story. Then we found the place. We wanted to leave because our kids were still young enough that finding new friends and starting over wouldn't be so traumatic. However, there was a point that convinced me I'd made the right decision. I was in an art class and I caught sight of a paparazzo taking pictures of me inside the class.



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That had always been my refuge and I'd always protected it, so when that was invaded I knew, yes, we were making the right decision. So there was no point that made us move, but that reaffirmed it.

EMPIRE: You had issues with paparazzi back then?

PFEIFFER: I remember maybe two or three years before [I left] it started to change. It used to be that if you had a movie coming out or you had some scandal going on then they'd be on you. You could almost time it. Your movie would be coming out and they'd follow you. Then your movie would come out and they'd leave you alone. But suddenly they were starting to pop up *all* the time. I remember calling my security and asking what was going on. They would ask, "Well, what's going on in your life?" I was like, "Nothing! I'm completely boring! Nothing's going on!" But the climate was changing.

EMPIRE: So you got out at the right time?

PFEIFFER: I really think I did.

EMPIRE: Was there any point when you thought you might not go back to work?

PFEIFFER: (*Long pause*) No. No, I don't think so. I always knew I'd go back.

EMPIRE: When you did come back you chose to work with two directors who weren't big names at the time: Matthew Vaughn had directed only *Layer Cake* before *Stardust* and Adam Shankman wasn't big before *Hairspray*. One might have thought you'd return in a project by someone more established.

PFEIFFER: Well, the game had really



As Frankie, alongside Al Pacino's Johnny, in Garry Marshall's 1991 rom-com

changed when I came back. I wasn't gone that long — I think it was four years — but there was a notable shift in the industry and I was very confused about it all. A lot of first-time directors were being given a shot on really big movies. Neither of those guys were first-time directors, of course, but that was something I noticed. I think I was just very impressed with both of them and because I had been gone so long I was just looking for interesting parts. Also now that I don't live in Los Angeles, every role means travelling for me, so I wanted roles that wouldn't involve being gone too long. I just wanted to get my feet wet again and they were perfect.

EMPIRE: You say the industry had shifted. Do you feel used to that shift now?

PFEIFFER: I think so. It's still a little foreign to me.



EMPIRE: In what way?

PFEIFFER: The unknowingness of it all. It's very unpredictable, the way things come together — is this going to happen? Who are these people? A million people financing a movie. You used to know who all the players were. It was all very clear-cut. I'm a type-A control freak, so that's taken some getting used to. Working with directors who don't have a lot of movies under their belt, or even working with a lot of people who have a lot less experience

released at a bad time.® Perhaps if it had been released at a better time it would have done better. But there are so many variables. It's just all a big crapshoot.

EMPIRE: On the flipside, there are those that don't do well at the time and are still remembered years later. *Grease 2* is something of a cult film now.

PFEIFFER: Is it? Is it really? Are you sure?

EMPIRE: Well, Matthew Vaughn said it was his favourite film of yours. So it has a fanbase.

“I love building things. I get power tools for Christmas.”

than myself on films. Just trusting that.

EMPIRE: You've said that you've no feel for what's commercial. Which of your films surprised you with their success?

PFEIFFER: Well, I'm always surprised when anything does well. Actually, I think I'm usually more surprised when things I think are really interesting don't do well. That's a part of it I don't get.

EMPIRE: For example?

PFEIFFER: I really thought *One Fine Day* was a good movie. I know why it did badly. It was

PFEIFFER: I haven't seen it in a long time but I think it's a very... I don't know. It's been so long since I've seen it that I don't even know how to talk about it.

EMPIRE: What were your feelings about it at the time? It was your big break, but I gather you didn't love it?

PFEIFFER: I didn't love *me* in it. But again, I never do. Critically, it was kind of panned. I know that I was panned. I remember one review, and I didn't read many, saying that I whined through my entire performance. And that's when I stopped reading reviews.

® *One Fine Day*, co-starring George Clooney, was released on December 22, 1996, one week after *Jerry Maguire*. It peaked at number five in the box office chart and grossed \$46 million in the US.

EMPIRE: And it almost stopped you getting the part in *Scarface*. Brian De Palma was reluctant to see you because of that film, right?

PFEIFFER: He was. I knew that. The casting director, Alixe Gordin, if it weren't for her, Brian wouldn't have seen me.

EMPIRE: How did you win him over?

PFEIFFER: It was just one of those days where I happened to give a good reading and I think he was so shocked because I don't think he expected anything good to come out of my mouth. So Brian was on my side, but Al (*Pacino*) was a little tougher.

EMPIRE: So how did you get Al on side?

PFEIFFER: I think it was my screen test. It was a tremendously long audition process. It went on for months. I had to keep coming back and back and back. The more I came back, the worse I got because I was so nervous and I was inexperienced. Fear is the most destructive thing for an actor. So I don't blame Al for being unimpressed with me, because I kept getting worse every time I came in. Finally I think Brian had to say, "It's not going to work," because I was just *bad*. But he was really lovely and I was sort of relieved because they were putting me out of my misery and I just couldn't go through it anymore. So I went about my merry way and then got a call: they wanted

to screen-test me. And I was like, "Oh no." I was so convinced I didn't have a shot at it that I just let it go and I relaxed and showed up and it went really well — much to everyone's surprise — and I could tell it went well. Also I made Al Pacino bleed. I cut his hand smashing [a plate].

EMPIRE: That's a way to make sure you're remembered.

PFEIFFER: Exactly. Although, of course, it wasn't deliberate.

EMPIRE: You've worked opposite some of the

making her claws
o Burton's *Batman*
urns (1992)



best as far as leading men go, including Jack Nicholson in *The Witches Of Eastwick*. In fact, that set had Jack, Cher, Susan Sarandon and you all together. That's a lot of big personalities in one place. How was that?

PFEIFFER: We were actually a great team. There were no personality clashes whatsoever among those actors. We became very close. It was a difficult shoot, but not because we didn't get along. We

So that never got stressful. The difference here is that we started with a really solid foundation, so it was just tweaking. *The Witches Of Eastwick* was more complicated.

EMPIRE: The best reviews of your career were for Susie Diamond in *The Fabulous Baker Boys*, which was a role you read long before you got to play her.

PFEIFFER: I read her five years before the film. I immediately knew she was great.

“The Witches Of Eastwick was a difficult shoot, but not because we didn't get along”

started with an unfinished script and then you get a lot of cooks in the kitchen and everyone's doing rewrites and it just became really stressful. But if anything, it made us stick together. It was like all the actors were in the trenches together. Working without a script doesn't work very well. We had a finished script but it wasn't one everyone was satisfied with. There were constant changes and there was a lot of drama. It's very rarely a positive to start without a solid foundation. It works sometimes. Like in *Dark Shadows*, there were a lot of script changes going on while we were shooting, but it was never a problem, I think because it was one person's vision (*Seth Grahame-Smith*).

EMPIRE: Why was it so long between you reading it and it getting made?

PFEIFFER: Well, I wasn't really in a position to get it made when I first read it. I wasn't a box-office draw then.

EMPIRE: So this would have been around the time you were in *Scarface*?

PFEIFFER: I don't really remember. I think they were sniffing around other people. Certainly when I first read the movie it couldn't have been made with me. I'm not sure if the Bridges brothers were attached then either. Then eventually (*screenwriter*) Steve Kloves came back when it looked like they had the financing and Jeff and Beau attached. I was thrilled, obviously.





Looking younger
than ever in
dust

being aware of that.

EMPIRE: You've mentioned before that you'd like Steve Kloves to write a sequel showing where the Baker Boys characters are now. Is that something that's seriously been discussed?

PFEIFFER: A couple of times. I don't think Steve is really interested in doing that (*laughs*). I haven't actually talked to him about it personally but word has got back to me that he's busy doing other things.

EMPIRE: Why do you want to revisit Susie Diamond?

PFEIFFER: I just think she's still a really great character. All those characters are fascinating and I think it would be interesting to see where they might be today.

EMPIRE: Where do you think she'd be?

PFEIFFER: I don't really know. I think she's a survivor though. I think she would have done well for herself, because she's pretty scrappy.

EMPIRE: You've turned down a number of big films in your career — *Pretty Woman*, *The Silence Of The Lambs*, *Thelma & Louise*. Any regrets?

EMPIRE: It's a role that's still referenced now. That piano scene is a classic. It led to a large number of spoofs. Have you seen many?

PFEIFFER: I love that it got spoofed. It's such a compliment. I actually don't know that I have seen any myself.

EMPIRE: There's a good one in *Hot Shots*.

PFEIFFER: I will look that up.

EMPIRE: You were Oscar-nominated for that role and in the unenviable position of being the favourite to win. Jessica Tandy then won for *Driving Miss Daisy*.^② How did that feel?

PFEIFFER: Wow. You know, I don't think I ever expected to win, so it didn't come as a big surprise to me. Obviously there's a part of you that wants to win, but I never felt like I had it in the bag. I don't really remember being aware that I was the 'favourite'. Maybe I was, but I don't recall

^② Pfeiffer won Best Actress in the majority of critics' awards in 1990, plus the Golden Globe, but Tandy beat her to both the Oscar and BAFTA.



PFEIFFER: I've never regretted anything I've turned down, no. But that's not to say I don't wish I'd had the opportunity to be in them. In a lot of cases when I've turned those films down it wasn't because I didn't want to do them, but because it didn't fit with my personal life at that time, or maybe there was something else I wanted to do a little bit more. It's circumstance. So there aren't any regrets about that.

EMPIRE: I've read that you're a big

have it. Why not? Just go once a week and talk it through.

EMPIRE: How long have you been going?

PFEIFFER: I don't go so often now, but I've been in and out, going to various therapists since my early 20s.

EMPIRE: Throughout your career you've played a lot of women who are drawn to things that aren't very good for them...

PFEIFFER: Like a lot of women we know...

EMPIRE: What do you think your therapist

“Everybody has hardship, but I don't think you have to be messed up to have therapy”

advocate of therapy...

PFEIFFER: Oh my God, have you read every single interview I've ever done? Yes, I am. Well, you know what they say, if you have a really good friend to listen to you then you don't need therapy. I'm not sure that's true, but I think it's a positive thing. Everybody could use a time to reflect without being judged and process all the shit that we all deal with on a daily basis. It's a complicated world and a lot of us come from dysfunctional backgrounds and it's not about surviving in this life, it's about the quality. Is there enough joy in your life?

Everybody has hardship, but I don't think you have to be seriously messed up to have therapy. I think everyone should

would say about that?

PFEIFFER: Ha! Well, for a start, I don't talk about that in therapy. But I think there's been a balance, don't you? I think I am definitely drawn to the dark side. I find that much more intriguing. I think everyone is drawn to the dark side. It's the moth to the flame.

EMPIRE: How difficult was it in the early days to be considered for darker parts, since people like to pigeonhole anyone blonde and beautiful as very happy?

PFEIFFER: Well, it happened in the beginning, definitely. I know Garry Marshall got a lot of flack for casting me in *Frankie & Johnny*.☹ People had these preconceived ideas of what kind of person can suffer heartache — as if anyone's



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Pfeiffer as Elizabeth
Collins Stoddard in
Burton's *Dark Shadows*

immune. So yes, I think in the beginning. But now I think more and more people see me that way because I've played those parts so often.

EMPIRE: Is it weird to be talked of as exceptionally beautiful?

PFEIFFER: It's weird to be asked that and have to answer it (*laughs*). That's weird.

EMPIRE: I'll move on then. Let's talk about carpentry. You love carpentry.

PFEIFFER: I do. I love building things.

EMPIRE: What do you make?

PFEIFFER: Many things. I redesigned and built the entire façade of a fireplace. I'll just go into Home Depot and ask the guys how you do it. They'll look at me like I have three heads. I built a deck. I built a playhouse for the kids out of old shutters, because I saw on Martha Stewart that you could do that. I've built all sorts. I get power tools for Christmas and birthdays.

EMPIRE: You're the ideal woman to buy presents for.

PFEIFFER: (*Laughs*) I think women are good at figuring stuff out. They like that.

EMPIRE: But most are not happy if you buy them power tools, believe me. Where did the love of building come from?

PFEIFFER: My dad was a contractor. He had a workshop

in our garage. He actually built an airplane in there, and we didn't have a very big garage. So he rebuilt that. We didn't have a lot of money. He'd be working in there and he'd give me a piece of wood and a hammer and I would just go out there and make stuff. I probably should have been a design engineer or something.

EMPIRE: It probably doesn't pay as well as your current job.

PFEIFFER: Maybe that's true. And there's a lot of schooling. Perhaps I made the right decision.

RETURN TO
THE TOP 

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DARK SHADOWS IS OUT ON MAY 11 AND WILL BE
REVIEWED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

📌 On Broadway, Kathy Bates had played the role of a fortysomething waitress, who begins a romance with an ex-con chef. She campaigned for the film role and spoke out about her disappointment that a younger, beautiful actress had been cast in the role.