

I, Marilyn

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1 HAPPY WITH GLADYS

I can speak.

“Ma!” I say.

Onteyeda applauds. I like applause. But then, she says:

“I’m not your Ma, Normajin, I’m your aunt Ida. Gladys is your Ma.”

Gladys is a woman with red hair who comes now and then. She brings me sweets. She’s nice. I like her smell. I’m always sad when she goes. I don’t know why. I feel she’s leaving me behind.

Onteyeda doesn’t smell as good as Gladys. She hides her eyes behind little round windows. The person named Albert-When has a very low voice, somewhat scary. There’s also a noisy little beast around. Onteyeda and Albert-When keep talking of a certain “Jesus,” but I haven’t seen her yet. I don’t know whether she lives here. Sometimes, we go to a big house where a black-dressed person also talks about this mysterious Jesus.

They call me “Baby” and something that sounds like Normandy or Normajin. Could this be my name? How ugly! They should at least consult you before they give you a name.

Something strange happens. Onteyeda and Albert-When stick a candle into a cake and ask me to blow the flame out.

“Today is June 1st,” they say. “Your birthday, Normajin. You’re born on June 1st, 1926.”

Gladys, the smell-nice lady, has come to see me perform this feat. She brought a woman with a creaky voice and gray hair. While everybody calls her Della, Gladys calls her Ma. I thought this was Gladys’s name. Doesn’t make sense.

This Della lives across the street. She takes me to her house, which is empty and dirty. She calls me “My little baby, my sweet Normajin, my pretty granddaughter.” I don’t like her voice. Her hair doesn’t smell good, her hands are rough. There’s this other baby, Lesta. Why doesn’t she take it to her house and call it “My sweet Lesta?”

“I went to India,” she says, “halfway across the world, to spread the Gospel of Jesus amongst the pagans and idolaters, but I came back to take care of you, Normajin.”

I wish she’d stayed in India. When will I see this Jesus they all keep mentioning?

I am afraid of Della. Often, she starts laughing or crying for no reason. She runs and jumps around so much she makes me dizzy, then she sits for hours without saying anything. She

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becomes angry and shouts: “Savages! They worship an idol with the head of an elephant! Repent, idolaters! You’ll roast in hell!”

One afternoon, in the middle of my nap, I get a terrible feeling that I can’t breathe anymore. I wake up and see Stella pressing a pillow onto my face. What kind of game is this? I kick and scream. She removes the pillow, sits near the bed and whines.

“Oh, my poor sweet Normajin, what was I doing? I am crazy. Oh forgive me my darling... Oh Lord Jesus, please Jesus, forgive a poor sinner...”

A few days later, she tries to murder me again. She takes me to the house of this invisible Jesus, and there she throws me into a pool of water.

“Now you are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, Normajin,” she says.

I am lucky: someone rescues me at the last minute. I cry a lot.

I’ve found that persons can belong to two different categories. Those with high voices call themselves Women, those with low voices Men. Or maybe the other way around. They do not dress the same. Men don’t like babies, especially when they are wet or dirty. Women come quickly when you cry, even at night.

Aunt Ida is my favorite woman. I like her better than Gladys. Sometimes, I forget what Gladys looks like. I’d rather not think about her, because it makes me sad. Lesta calls Ida Ma, but I must call her Aunt Ida.

Albert-When owns a noisy moving machine. Sometimes we all go to a place with a lot of water and sand. I play in the sand with Lesta. I like to be naked in the sun.

Della has vanished. I am glad. They punished her because she tried to kill me.

“The police took her to an asylum,” Ida says.

A few weeks later, she says:

“Your granma Della died in the asylum.”

I don’t understand any of this.

Gee, I can really talk. I say Mama and Baby and Bottle and Milk. We go to the place with water and sand in Albert-When’s car. I say “Big Wet.” Ida and Albert-When applaud.

“What a clever child,” they say.

Lesta is jealous and cries. I am glad I can speak. I feel less stupid.

Now that I can walk and speak, I go to Sunday school with Lesta and Ida. I learn a song: *Jesus loves me, Yes I know*. It is beautiful, I sing it all the time. But who is this Jesus?

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“Today Jesus is born,” they say. They bring a green tree into the house and light candles. There is a tricycle for Lesta and me under the tree. Lesta always rides on the tricycle when I want it. I push him. He falls and cries. What a crybaby! Ida is angry at me. She whips me with a leather belt, so then I also cry. Life is hard. I complain to Gladys when she comes.

“Ida whipped me,” I say.

But Gladys sides with Ida. Nobody loves me.

Lesta stole my tricycle, and because of him I was whipped, so now Jesus punishes him: he has a whooping cough. He is going to die. I’m glad.

Lesta did not die. And he’s got the tricycle all to himself, because I caught his whooping cough and can’t get up from my bed. Gladys takes a leave from her job with the film company and stays with me day and night. I’m going to die, so all the people who whip me and punish me will be very sorry.

It’s nice to be sick. Your mother stays with you and makes fresh orange juice and tells you stories and offers you gifts. Albert-When also offers me a gift: a black and white dog who followed him in the street. I call it Tippy and play with it on my bed. Gee, he has a gooey tongue.

Gladys says that soon we shall live together in Hollywood. She must earn more money and find a bigger house. She tells me why I live with Aunt Ida and Albert-When:

“When I was pregnant, I asked Ma whether I could stay here in Hawthorne with her. Then she could have taken care of you when I went back to work. But she was going to India to convert the idolaters. She told me the neighbors across the street, Ida and Albert-When Bolender, were renting some rooms in their house. So I stayed there a couple weeks after you were born. I can’t live in Hawthorne full time, because it’s a two-hour streetcar ride to Hollywood, where I work. I cut film, you know, that’s my job. I wish I could bring you to Hollywood, but there’s no room in my room.”

She pays Aunt Ida and Albert-When twelve dollars a week for keeping me. So Aunt Ida is not really my aunt. She likes to be called Aunt Ida because it sounds nice. She is not Lesta’s real mother, either. Ida and Albert-When have “adopted” Lesta, whatever that means.

I go to school with Lesta. It is only four blocks away from Ida’s house. We walk the four blocks with Susan Preger. She’s a big girl, already in third grade. And Tippy always comes with us. He waits for me at the door of the school and I’m sure to find him when I come out.

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He is so glad to see me, he yelps and jumps like a kangaroo and licks my face with his gooey tongue. Oh, how I love it!

We learn to read and write. It is quite difficult. At first, we only learn words with three letters, like dog, cat, bed, red, hot, nut, bad, hat, fat, god. You just write them the way you hear them. It seems that Lesta's name should be written Lester, and mine Norma Jeane.

Every morning we pray God before the class begins. In the prayer, God is called "Our Father in Heaven." I don't know where this Heaven is, but all the other children seem to have a father in Los Angeles too.

"Mama, where is my father?" I ask Gladys.

"Very far away," she answers.

These other children simply live in houses with their mothers and fathers. Why do I live with people who are not even my real aunt and uncle? Maybe Gladys is not really my mother. I am the daughter of a beautiful Prince and a sweet Princess, who are going to come some day and take me away to their marble palace. So then I shall pull my tongue at all these kids who live in tiny houses with their stupid parents.

Something very terribly awful happened. Tippy has been shot dead. He would cry indoor, so we used to let him out at night. What did he do out there? I guess he went and played with other dogs. He did no harm. I know who killed him: this bad man, Susan Preger's father. I hate him. He pretends that Tippy destroyed his flowers.

Once, I went to his house to play with Susan. She was not there. Her father told me to come in and wait for her because she would be back soon. Then he put his hand under my skirt. Why did he do that?

"Don't tell your Aunt Ida," he said.

Obviously, what he did was wrong. I didn't tell Ida, but Jesus saw him. And now he has killed Tippy. He'll roast in Hell.

We bury Tippy in our garden. Lester digs the hole. We sing: *Jesus loves me, Yes I know.*

Gladys takes me to Hollywood to show me her office. She works in a company called Columbia. I sit on a stool and watch her cut film. She cuts it with a machine, then she repairs it with tape. So why does she cut it in the first place? Doesn't make sense.

She wears white cotton gloves.

"You must not leave any fingerprints on the negative, you understand, Norma Jeane."

While she works, she tells me about her life.

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“When I was six, my father became crazy. He screamed his head off. They took him to the hospital and he died.”

“Like Della?”

“That’s right. His name was Otis Elmer Monroe. He worked for the tram company. When I was ten, Della married Lyle, a colleague of Otis, but she divorced eight months later. Then she had other boyfriends, many boyfriends, who lived at our place. When I was fourteen, she decided to go and stay with one of them. She didn’t know what to do with my brother Marion and me. She sent Marion to cousins we had in San Diego. She gave me, or should I say sold me, as a bride to John Baker. She told the judge I was eighteen. I hated Baker. What kind of a man would marry a fourteen-year old girl? We fought a lot, then he went away and we divorced. Then I married another baker. I mean, a guy who baked bread. His name was Martin Mortensen. He also went away.”

“They all go away.”

“Yeah... You’ll find that men are a worthless bunch, Norma Jeane.”

Some people have two names and some have three. For instance, Ida Bolender and Albert Wayne Bolender. I have got three: Norma Jeane Baker. At first, the schoolmistress thought my name was Norma Jeane Mortensen. But then Gladys talked to her. I think she wants to forget Mr. Mortensen, as if she hadn’t divorced from Mr. Baker. It is wrong to divorce. Jesus does not like it.

That’s why she didn’t marry my father, I guess. I don’t understand how I could be born if they were not married. Susan Preger says that babies are born when pregnant women go to the toilet. The baby grows in her belly like a seed in the earth, and when it is ripe it comes out. I asked her what a father is for. She doesn’t know.

I went to the movies for the first time in my life with Gladys. She told me the names of all the actors on the screen. She sees them when she cuts the films. Aunt Ida says going to the movies is wrong.

“We go to church, not to the movies. If the world ends when you’re in a movie theater, Norma Jeane, you go straight to hell.”

Ida makes dresses for me on her Singer sewing-machine, so that I can go to school with a different dress every day. Some other kids wear blue-jeans, but I only wear starched dresses. Everybody says that I look real pretty. But starched dresses aren’t any good for playing ball. Sometimes, I envy these blue jeans children. Envy is a sin.

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Last Christmas, Lester and I received roller-skates from the Bollenders. Often we skate to school. I feel like crying when I remember how we used to roller-skate with Tippy running in front of us. If I fall, my pretty dress becomes dirty, and Ida scolds me. When I am a bad girl, she whips me with the leather belt. This leather belt belongs to Albert Wayne. He sharpens his razor on it. I wish he used an electric razor.

When it rains, I wear a yellow raincoat.

Once a week, I go to the house of Miss Craft to study piano. Gladys says that nice children must learn piano, and that I am old enough. But I am only seven. Miss Craft is very severe. I must sit straight and play with round fingers and read music and never make mistakes. I can already play *London Bridge Is Falling Down* and *Little Bo-Peep* and *Oh Where Is My Little Dog Gone*, which reminds me of Tippy. If I work well, I shall soon be able to play *Jesus Loves Me, Yes I Know*.

Gladys buys a white piano for me, and also a white house in the hills north of Hollywood. I shall go and live with her next October. I will change school, of course. But then I shall come back here to visit Ida and Albert Wayne and Lester and Susan Preger. I shall regret them, but I won't regret Ida's whippings and Susan's father. Gladys says the white piano belonged to a famous star, Fredric March.

The new house is quite big, but Gladys and I use only two rooms. She rents the rest of the house to Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson and Vivian, because she needs the money.

These people are strange. They come from a country named England and speak with a funny accent. They drink whisky and smoke cigarettes and play poker at night. England is a very sinful country. That's why George Washington made war against it. Every evening, before going to bed, I pray for their souls.

They work in the movies. They don't call them movies, but films or pictures. Mr. Atkinson is a stand-in for George Arliss, a famous English star. When George Arliss drinks too much whisky, Mr. Atkinson replaces him—only if he hasn't drunk too much whisky himself, of course. Even Gladys sometimes smokes and drinks and plays poker with the Atkinsons. I warned her that she would roast in Hell, but she just laughed.

Mrs. Atkinson is a dress extra. That is, she plays old ladies in movies where they have a party and people wear an evening dress. Vivian is Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson's daughter. She is also an extra, but she would like to become a stand-in.

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I go to Hollywood grammar-school. Our schoolmistress teaches us multiplication and division, but I find all these numbers quite boring. What I like is English. She says that I speak and write good English.

“You picked it up from these English people in your home,” she says.

That’s the good side of it, but there is also a bad side: because they always want to correct me and ask me to repeat words, I am beginning to stammer. The other kids in class laugh at me. I hate them. They use foul words, which is a certified sin.

On Saturday, I love to go to the movies. Mr. Atkinson walks me to Grauman’s Chinese Theater because Gladys is always busy on that day.

“I’m trying to find a father for you,” she says.

Where do you find a father?

Right in front of the Chinese Theater, there is a place in the pavement where all the famous stars print their feet in cement. I am not eight yet, but my feet are already bigger than Gloria Swanson’s. So I guess I could never become a star. My feet have the same exact size as Rudolf Valentino’s.

Gladys says Jean Harlow is the most beautiful actress in the world. As I agree, I decide to write my name Norma Jean instead of Norma Jeane.

I stay at the movies all afternoon, so that I usually see the same film three times. I worry somewhat about the end of the world, but so far it hasn’t happened. I love musicals, where everybody sings and dances. I learn all the songs and sing them when I come back home. Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson and Vivian and their poker partners seem to like them much better than *Jesus Loves Me, Yes I Know*. They’ll roast in Hell, but they don’t seem to care.

One good thing is that I can wear blue jeans to school now. I like to play softball with the other girls. I would like it even better if I could play baseball with the boys, but they won’t let me. At school, girls and boys don’t really mix. The boys always talk about famous ball players and the World Series and football and cars, and when we come near them they shout “Go play with your dolls!” I don’t even have a doll. The one I used to play with was Ida’s, so she kept it for another girl she took in after me. I have roller skates and also a new bicycle, which Gladys offered me for Christmas. Next Christmas, I shall ask for a gun, so that I can shoot at those boys.

I draw a big picture with all the people I know: Lester, Ida and Albert Wayne Bolender, Susan Preger, Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson and Vivian, Grace McKee, Gladys, and also my Daddy who went away. I put Della and Tippy in Heaven, even though I don’t remember what Della looked like and they may not accept dogs in Heaven.

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Grace McKee works with Gladys at Columbia Studios. She's okay. If Gladys finds a new father for me, I'll put him into the picture too.

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2 ORPHAN!

When I come back from school, Mr. Atkinson is waiting for me in front of the house. He takes my hand and says he has something to tell me.

“Your mother is ill, Norma Jean. She’s gone to the hospital for a while.”

I hope she comes back soon. Mrs. Atkinson will take care of me in the meantime. Grace McKee comes by and says that everything will be all right. I cry a little.

I’ve lived only three months here with Gladys, but I miss her terribly. The ghost of her perfume floats in the air and makes me sad. Maybe she went to the hospital to have another baby. People do have babies in hospitals. They say that I can’t go and visit her. Grace McKee says that the hospital is an asylum, but I don’t know what this word means.

Grace McKee says that Gladys will remain in the asylum for a long time. There is something wrong with her mind. It’s true that sometimes she made up sentences that didn’t mean anything. She got very angry for no reason, she broke dishes, she screamed, then she didn’t remember what had happened. She scared me. She reminded me of Della, my grandmother. I hope she won’t die in the hospital like her father and her mother. Oh Gosh, I’d rather have an angry Gladys than no Gladys at all. Who’s going to take care of me, now?

Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson are staying with me in the house. Gladys has borrowed money from the bank to buy the house, so Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson now pay the rent to the bank instead of paying to Gladys. Also, they have sold a beautiful Spanish chest of drawers which Gladys had bought at an auction, to pay for the electricity and gas. They say they’ll have to sell most of the furniture, including Fredric March’s white piano. I’ve stopped taking lessons with Miss Craft, anyway.

When I am older, maybe I can work in the movies like Gladys and the Atkinsons. I don’t think I would enjoy cutting film all day. I’d rather be an extra or a stand-in or a star. I have seen all the movies of Claudette Colbert. Gee, she is beautiful. Sometimes I dress myself with a bed sheet to look like Cleopatra, and I pretend I am Claudette Colbert in Cecil B. DeMille’s movie. I talk to Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony for hours in front of the mirror in my room. It is fun. It takes my mind off Gladys. Nobody worries about me, because they play poker while drinking whisky.

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“We just can’t pay the bank,” Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson tell me.

So the bank takes the big white house and we all move to an apartment. On the day we move, I’m so sad! I cry and cry. When Gladys comes back from the hospital, she will find that she doesn’t own her house anymore.

We stay in the same neighborhood, so I still go to Hollywood grammar-school. The teacher says I am lucky to have the Atkinsons, otherwise the State of California would take me. I don’t really understand this. What would the State do with me?

One thing is wrong: I’ve stopped going to church on Sunday. I must be careful not to become a sinner like all these other people. My grandmother is dead, my father is far away, my mother has been locked up inside an asylum, but I trust Jesus to look after me. My Father in Heaven is testing me, just like Job. These other kids live with their fathers and mothers in houses, and nothing ever happens to them, so Jesus doesn’t have to look after them. I am lucky. If things get worse, I shall rejoice.

Things get worse. Gladys still doesn’t come back from the hospital, but George Arliss returns to England and Mr. Atkinson loses his job. That’s the drawback with being a stand-in. As Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson are already quite old, they decide to sail back too. I have lived with them one full year.

I stay with some neighbors, the Giffens. I am nine years old. They have a big house and three children. We play with toys and not with cards like at the Atkinsons. Nobody smokes or drinks whisky. We go to Church every Sunday.

They like me and I like them. They come from Mississippi. Mr. Giffen is a sound engineer in a Los Angeles radio station, but he must go back to Mississippi to work in a radio station there. The Giffens want to adopt me so I could stay with them. That would be nice: I would live on a farm and take care of the hens and pigs and learn how to milk a cow. I could call Mrs. Giffen Mama.

They write to Gladys and ask her to give me up for adoption. She refuses, so they go away without me. Once more, I’m all alone.

On September 13, 1935, the State of California kidnaps me. A car brings me to avenue El Centro, in Hollywood, between the Paramount and RKO studios. We stop in front of a gate marked “The Los Angeles Orphans’ Home Society.” I just can’t believe it. I turn towards the lady from the State.

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“Hey, you must be kidding... There must be some kind of mistake. I’m not an orphan!”

I refuse to step out of the car. They drag me and carry me by force. I scream like crazy. But then, I see all these other children looking at me and I feel foolish, so I stop crying. Still, I can’t get over the trick they have played on me. My mother is still alive, so I’m not an orphan. If I was an orphan, the Giffens would have adopted me and I wouldn’t be a prisoner in this awful place.

I’m even beginning to doubt whether Jesus is watching over me. How could he let them lock me up in this orphan asylum? They show me a bed inside a dormitory, so I drop my bag on it. I eat some dinner, then I undress and hide myself under the sheets to cry the night away.

When I was living with Gladys, she didn’t spend much time with me. But Mrs. Atkinson took good care of me. Before her, it was Ida, and after her Mrs. Giffen. I’ve always had someone real close, whom I could turn to and talk to and trust, just like a mother. That’s over. Now I’m alone for good. I am sharing a dormitory with other lonely girls and a gray-robed “housemother” who does not look or act like a mother at all. Nobody tucks me in and kisses me good night, nobody prepares my favorite dishes, nobody says anything nice to me. I’m only nine, but I feel my childhood is over.

The dormitory is on the fourth floor of the orphanage. From my bed, I can see the RKO studios. A huge “RKO” electric sign stands on the studio’s roof and shines through the night like a meaningless beacon.

I change school again. Now I go with the other girls, and also with the boys who live in another building, to El Centro Public School. I miss my former schoolteacher, who said I spoke good English. The new teacher doesn’t seem to notice me at all.

Most of the other children aren’t real orphans either. Their parents are too poor to keep them, or they have moved away to another state and forgotten them here. But when we all walk to school together, people stop and say “Poor little orphans.” I hate them.

I ask a housemother whether they have received any news from Gladys.

“Will she come out of the hospital soon?”

“You’d better not ask this question anymore, Norma Jean. Your mother will never come out of the asylum.”

I would like to know whether Gladys is still alive, but the housemother seems so angry that I dare not ask anything else. So maybe I’m indeed an orphan.

The whole world has forgotten me, except for one person: Grace McKee, my mother’s colleague at Columbia. She comes almost every Saturday and takes me to the movies. We see

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Mutiny on the Bounty, with Clark Gable. She tells me that Gladys is still alive. I call her aunt Grace. I think she uses the same perfume as Gladys, but she doesn't smell as good.

When she can't come, I feel extremely sad. I just walk around and dream that my real parents, the Prince and the Princess, will come and snatch me from these monstrous gray housemothers. Some other girl might talk to me, but I don't even hear her. I don't speak much here, anyway. Most of the others are lost in their dreams, too. They look at the ground as if expecting to find a magical coin that will help them fly away or something.

What I would like is someone I could kiss. Maybe I should ask aunt Grace to bring me a doll or a teddy bear. But a girl of ten doesn't play with dolls and teddy bears. Some kids here suck their thumbs; I tried it but I felt foolish.

Eating a lot helps when I really feel blue. After a while, the housemother notices that I always ask for seconds.

"You shouldn't eat too much, Norma Jean, otherwise you'll grow fat," she says.

"Please, Ma'm, I want some more."

"Did you hear what I said?"

"Yes Ma'm."

When I go to the movies with aunt Grace, she buys as many ice-creams as I want. And hamburgers and French fries. I hope I become real fat and burst so they'll all be sorry.

To make us even more miserable, they force us to wash dishes. Aunt Grace says that I have a very smooth and beautiful skin, but when I wash dishes my hands become all red. Can anyone be unhappier than I am?

Not only does nobody kiss us here, but we can't even drink out of glasses. They're afraid we would break them, so we drink from metal tumblers.

There's a girl, Theresa, who can't stand the metal tumblers either, so we decide to escape from this prison together. During a big ball game opposing the girls to the boys, we pretend to go to the toilet and walk across the back dormitory toward El Centro Avenue. My heart is beating so loud that I'm afraid someone might hear it. A housemother sees us and calls from a window. We're scared and run back to the baseball field. The housemother catches us before we arrive there.

"Don't tell the Head, please!" I ask her.

Of course she tells. The Directress doesn't scold me, because she's the only decent person here. Once she called me to her office and let me play with her Pekinese dog and even

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powdered my face and said that I could keep the powder on since it was Sunday. Aunt Grace must have told her that I like make-up and perfume and lipstick.

When I go to the movies, aunt Grace lets me put lipstick on. Sometimes we go to shops and I try dresses. She says I look like Jean Harlow and I'll become a star some day. She takes me to a beauty parlour where they wave my hair into what they call a "Marcel." Otherwise my hair is quite straight, but at least I'm a natural blonde. When I come back to the orphanage, Theresa pretends she doesn't recognize me. It is for fun, but I think she may be somewhat jealous.

I hope aunt Grace is going to take me away from this jail. She tells me that she wants to marry. She met this very tall man, Mr. Goddard, whom everybody calls Doc. He has three children, but no wife because he is divorced. Grace introduces me to him and his children. Two of them, Josephine and Fritz, are very young, but the elder girl, Beebe, is only two years younger than me. Beebe and I play together and have lots of fun. We've just seen all the same movies, and we both love Claudette Colbert and Jean Harlow. She hates school, just like me.

I am sure that when she'll be married, aunt Grace will take me in with them. Otherwise, why would she have introduced me to the Goddards? Also, she tells me that she promised Gladys she would get me out of here. The rub is that she isn't sure whether she wants to marry or not.

"You know, Norma Jean, Doc is ten years younger than me, so maybe our marriage won't hold. I shall be an old lady when he will still be in his prime."

I've seen a movie where a prisoner marked the days on the wall of his cell with a piece of chalk. I can't do that because we must not deface the wall, but I know that I've been in the orphanage for more than six hundred days—that is, nearly two years. I just celebrated my eleventh birthday. I can't stand much more.

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3 AUNT ANA

Free at last! On June 7, 1937, we're playing ball, and actually beating the boys. I have just hit the ball so far that I ran all the way to second base. I am right there on second base when the Directress comes to me and says that aunt Grace is taking me out.

I feel as if I could explode with joy. I pack my bags in a hurry and fly to the sitting-room where Grace is waiting for me.

"I can't take you with me, Norma Jean, because I haven't married Doc yet, but they named me your official guardian and I've found a nice home for you."

The Directress kisses me goodbye. I am sorry to part from Theresa.

"I'll come and visit you," I say.

We both know that I don't mean it. I don't want to ever see that orphanage again.

So now I live in Compton, south of Los Angeles, with the Johnsons. Mr. Johnson makes wax, the kind you polish furniture with, and his wife sells it. It's called Johnson wax, but it's not the same as the famous Johnson wax which you buy in stores. It's a white liquid wax, whereas the other one is yellow and solid.

Every morning, Mrs. Johnson and I get up early.

"Hurry up, Norma Jean," she says. "Let's go! And don't forget to lock the door as you come out."

Gee, I haven't even finished my breakfast. I climb into her old Chevrolet, which carries a few dozen Johnson wax bottles in the trunk, and we spend the day making the round of the drugstores and hardware stores in Los Angeles county. At first I like to move and look at the landscape, but after a few weeks I get fed up with all these back roads and farms and villages and store owners. I like to run and play ball and jump and swim and hop and somersault, but I am stuck day after day on the front seat of a Chevrolet. With me, things always turn out wrong.

How did aunt Grace find these people? Did she really know them? Instead of going to school and learning useful stuff, like any kid my age, I carry wax bottles. Mrs. Johnson got

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herself a servant she needn't even pay. I am a slave, actually. Yet they taught me in school that president Lincoln abolished slavery. I can't stand this awful wax smell.

I complain to Grace, so then she finds another family, the Bendiens. The husband and the wife are shouting and fighting all the time, and the baby is crying all the time. That Chevrolet was not too bad, I think. I wonder whether aunt Grace wants to get rid of me or what.

I used to be jealous of all these kids in school with regular homes and parents, but some of them probably have parents who shout and fight. When he drinks, Mr. Bendien uses terrible words. He presses his body close to mine and he touches my breasts and tries to put his hand under my dress like Susan's father did.

"If you don't stop right away, I am going to tell Mrs. Bendien."

"She isn't going to believe you. All you girls from the orphanage are sluts and liars. You've got a woman's body, and you could go to bed with a man. I'm sure you've done it already..."

"I won't do that until I am married."

"Ha! Are you ready to bet?"

I tell aunt Grace that I hate it here.

"I'd rather go back to the orphanage."

"I'll take you with me very soon, Norma Jean."

Actually, she made up her mind and just married Doc Goddard. She is fixing Doc's house. There's plenty of room there, because Doc's children are staying with their mother. I shall have a room all to myself.

I've spent the month of June with the Johnsons and the month of July with the Bendiens. Aunt Grace sends me to stay with the family of my uncle Marion Monroe until school begins. Olive, my uncle's wife, is away because she works in a farm during the summer. Her mother, Ida Martin, takes care of my cousins. There are two small girls, Olive and Ida Mae, and a boy my age, Jack. My uncle Marion is away too. Nobody knows where he's gone, or whether he's still alive. This reminds me of what Gladys told me: her first husband went away, her second husband went away, my father went away. Gladys thought that Mortensen, her second husband, had died in a car accident, but Grace says he lives in San Francisco.

Jack enters my bed in the middle of the night and begins to paw me all over. I wake up and scream. Ida Martin comes and hits him with a steel hairbrush. I stay one hour under the shower, but I still don't feel clean.

I, Marilyn

There are good news and bad news.

Good news is that I'm living with aunt Grace and Doc Goddard, so I really have a home now. I go to Emerson Junior High School in Westwood, which is okay. At least, I like most teachers.

Bad news is that the other pupils are way ahead of me, because I've changed school often and never learnt any serious mathematics. I can't even do long division. I'm the oldest kid in the class. I put lipstick on and eyeliner. Nobody else uses make-up. The others are jealous. They say I'm pretending to be Jean Harlow. So what? It's my own face. Leave me alone!

Very bad news is that, although I like Doc and Grace, they smoke and drink like the Atkinsons.

Good news is that there's someone with religion around: Ana Lower, Grace's aunt, who lives in Culver City. She has white hair. She's like a grandmother to me. Her religion is Christian Science, and every Sunday we go to the Christian Science Church together. She has given me the holy book of her religion, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy. She was a Baker just like me, but she lived in the East. She invented Christian Science all by herself. What she says is that God loves everybody so much that if we just pray sincerely we'll always be happy and healthy. We fall sick because we don't love and pray enough. Ana says doctors can't cure us:

"We shouldn't ingest any medicine, Norma Jean. Drugs seem to cure but don't really attack the root of our illness, which is inside our mind. We must just learn to trust God. Divine Love has always met, and will always meet, every human need."

Doc Goddard works as an engineer making wings for airplanes in a factory. He also spends a lot of time at home, in the garage, where he invents new machines.

"Someday I'll sell my patents and become a millionaire," he says.

I wonder why he doesn't sell them right away.

This man next door, Ed Dougherty, also works in a factory, as a welder or something. He sometimes helps Doc in the garage. The Doughertys have two sons, and also a daughter who is married and doesn't live with them. Jimmy Dougherty is a big bully.

Doc's daughter, Beebe, becomes my best friend. She could really be my sister: her mother went crazy when she was a kid and Doc couldn't take care of her, so she lived with twelve different families, just like me.

I, Marilyn

I tell her my real father is Clark Gable, but that it is a secret. So why not? Maybe it's true. I've tacked a picture of him to the wall above my bed, next to a picture of president Lincoln, who abolished slavery. At least I don't pretend president Lincoln was my father.

I had stopped going to the movies when I was staying with the Johnsons and Bendiens, and now I am catching up. My favorite movie is *Marie Antoinette*, with Norma Shearer. Not only do I cry every time I see her climbing to the guillotine, but I cry even more when I replay the scene by myself inside my bedroom. I cry when I part from Tyrone Power, my lover (I also play him, of course), I cry when I say goodbye to my little boy and climb into my bed, which is a horse-cart and will take me to the execution ground, I cry when my head rolls into sawdust. I am a good crier.

I like Norma Shearer, because we have the same first name. Gladys told me she named me after Norma Talmadge, who played in silent movies.

When I go to the movies with Beebe, boys glare and whistle. I put tight sweaters so that my breasts look good. I am quite tall, and my hair is nice and curly, because Grace gives me permanents every other week. Their color is a kind of light chestnut brown, but they lighten yet in summer and turn to honey blond.

One unpleasant consequence of growing up is that now I have periods every month and they hurt. I am sure that if I learn to pray and love properly, the cramps will go away.

Next week, on June 1st, 1940, I shall be fourteen.

Aunt Ana buys a new house on Nebraska avenue, in West Los Angeles. She sells her old Culver City house to Grace and Doc, so we move there. Gee, I love this house, and especially its garden. It has high trees, nice-smelling flowers and even squirrels.

We now live more than three miles away from Emerson Junior High. Grace makes a deal with our former neighbors, the Doughertys. Beebe and I, we walk to the Doughertys' place after school, then Jim drives us home when he comes back from his work. He makes airplane parts in the big Lockheed plant. He earns so much money that he just bought a blue Ford Coupé, although he is only eighteen.

He is not as stupid as I first thought. He doesn't talk much, that's for sure. He grows a thin mustache that makes you wonder whether he doesn't also have a Clark Gable picture over his bed. On a Saturday night, we go to a dance together at Adel Precision Products, in Burbank. That's where Doc Goddard works. It was Grace's idea that we should go there with Jim and a friend of Jim. Beebe lets me wear a red silk dress she has. We stop on the way to the dance

I, Marilyn

and have malteds in a diner. Beebe's date is a funny guy, but she doesn't like him. Although it is a company dance, it's nice.

"Grace wants you to marry Jim," Beebe says to me in the powder room.

"You must be kidding. Why don't *you* marry him?"

Everybody says that I am sexier than girls my age. Maybe Grace is afraid I might seduce Doc, who is so much younger than her. Actually, I have a hard time keeping him at arm's length. When we come back from the factory ball, everybody goes to bed except Doc, who stays downstairs to have one more drink. He has already had plenty at the dance. Drinking changes him into someone quite unpleasant, who often makes passes at me. He waits until everybody is asleep and he steps into my room. I feel the weight of his body upon mine and the disgusting taste of his whisky-flavored lips kissing me.

"Leave me alone, Jack," I say.

I wake up with a start and see it isn't my cousin, but Doc. It could be a hopeless situation, because he is such a big and strong fellow. Maybe he loses some strength when he drinks. Anyway, he gets up as soon as I move and push him, and leaves the room. I feel sick, and throw up into the toilet.

The only person I fully trust is aunt Ana. I talk the situation over with her, and she says I should move into her new house on Nebraska Avenue. As there is no way I could remain in Emerson Junior High, I transfer to University High School, in West Los Angeles.

How happy I feel here! Aunt Ana is so good to me. So good to everybody. I don't think that she can hurt any human being or beast even. I am certainly a better person when I am with her, because she radiates so much kindness that I can't help catch some for myself.

She has convinced me that I shouldn't resent what Doc did to me. It is not evil, because evil does not really exist as such. Doc lacks love, that's why he drinks and does strange things. If he only learnt to pray, he would be all right.

I have known so many situations... Now at last I think I have found my haven, my harbor, my home. I especially love the evenings I spend with aunt Ana. We eat cookies and drink herb tea. She describes things she has seen in the past, like the great earthquake of San Francisco and a gold rush or two. She tells me about the different religions: the Methodists, the Evangelists, the Mormons, the Catholics, the Jews, the Moslems. All worship the same God, of course, and put love forward.

"As long as you love God and all living beings, Norma Jean, it does not matter what religion you follow."

I, Marilyn

What's strange is she doesn't believe we go to Paradise or Hell after we die.
"We just become pure love," she says.

This happiness could not last. Grace is going East, because Doc has received a promotion: he will be head of sales of an Adel Precision Products' factory in West Virginia.

"Can't I just stay with aunt Ana?" I ask Grace.

"I'm afraid not, Norma Jean. You see, Gladys made me your guardian, which means the state of California gives me a pension for your upkeep. Whether you come with me or stay here, the state will stop paying the pension. Aunt Ana is not rich. She gets some money by renting part of her house to a family, and that's about all. Not enough to feed two people. If you really wanted to stay here, you could get married, of course."

I want to ask her whether she is joking, but then I remember what Beebe said about Jim. Grace confirms my hunch.

"I am sure that Jim Dougherty would be a good husband for you," she says.

Maybe it is indeed a good idea, but I don't like the way it has come up. I mean, since my very birth I have been moved about by people like a dog. Taken from one place and sent to another, transferred from home to home, given away to the state. And now they're selling me to Jim because they must get rid of me.

"If you don't marry him, you'll have to return to the orphans' home," Grace says.

I talk it over with aunt Ana, but it seems that there really is no other way. Besides, aunt Ana thinks that if I marry I won't suffer every month when I have my period. So I say yes. Aunt Ana and Grace go to the Doughertys and propose, then Grace goes to West Virginia with Doc. How queer... Marriages don't usually happen this way. You expect a courtship under the moonlight or something, and then the young man asks the girl's father for her hand. But of course, the girl's father is precisely what's lacking.

Still, Jim could have said a few nice words under the moonlight.

I, Marilyn

4 I MARRY

On June 1st, 1942, I celebrate my sixteenth birthday. On June 19, I marry. Can't complain: I'm two years older than Gladys when she married Mr. Baker.

Aunt Ana gives me a beautiful white wedding dress, which she embroidered herself. Jim rents a white tuxedo. The Goddards couldn't come from West Virginia, but the Bolenders, Ida and Albert, are here. Aunt Ana inquired about Gladys: she's not well enough to get out of the asylum. Jim's older brother, whose name is Marion like my uncle, is his best man. Jane Kostman, my classmate in University High School, is my maid of honor. Actually, I dropped out of school last month (just before completing my sophomore year), since I am now going to be a homemaker.

The minister who's marrying us complains about my name.

"Is it Baker or Mortensen?"

"It used to be Mortensen, but Mortensen isn't my father, so my name is Baker, although he's not my father either."

"This is not clear at all."

"What does it matter?" Jim asks. "From now on, she's going to be Norma Jean Dougherty."

He doesn't speak much, but when he speaks he makes sense.

We go to an Italian restaurant, *Florentine Gardens*, for our wedding lunch. I count at least twenty people on the Dougherty side. A waiter spills tomato sauce on Jim's white rented tuxedo.

Jim hasn't taken a leave from Lockheed. He hasn't even told his foreman that he is getting married. So instead of starting on a honeymoon, we just go to our new house on Vista del Monte avenue in Sherman Oaks. That's just north of Ventura Boulevard.

It's not much of a house. We only have one room, and also a bathroom with a shower and a kitchen. The bed is one of these pull-down things, which you fold up in the daytime.

I, Marilyn

So we pull down the bed. When Jim does these very strange things to me, I try not to think of Doc Goddard and Susan Preger's father and Mr. Bendien, but I just can't forget them and I cry a little.

"It always hurts the first time," Jim says.

This time, I think that I am settled for good. It's not just any other home, it's my home. My stove, my refrigerator, my vacuum-cleaner, all brand-new. Gee, how I love to wash and iron and dust and cook in my own house!

As far as cooking is concerned, I've got some learning to do. Other girls have a mother who teaches them those things. Jim says I serve him carrots and sweet peas too often. That's because I like the contrast between the green and the red. Grace told me I could add a pinch of salt to my coffee to enhance its taste. I forget what she said and add a spoonful... Too much enhancing, I'm afraid.

What I don't have is a washing machine, because there isn't enough room really. So Jim drives me once a week to the Laundromat downtown. Otherwise I wash his shirts at home in the bathroom sink, but I don't like it because it makes my hands red. They say someone has invented a washing machines for dishes. If I could get one of those, I wouldn't need to wash dishes, which is what I hate most.

On week-ends we take the car and drive out of town. Jim likes all kinds of outdoor activities, and so do I. We often go to Sherwood Lake, where we swim and row a boat and run and get a tan. Jim is a great fisher and hunter. I try to overcome my disgust when he asks me to take a fish off the hook or skin a rabbit. I tell him that if he loved God more, he wouldn't feel the need to kill living beings, but he just laughs at me.

"If you loved God more, Norma Jean, you wouldn't eat hamburgers," he says.

My husband dropped out of school even earlier than I did, but he has brains.

Sometimes we go horseback riding together. One evening, as we're coming back late, I ask Jim how the horse can see in the dark.

"Why don't you turn on the headlights?" he suggests.

"Oh yeah, I'll do that... But where's the headlight switch?"

Then I understand that he was kidding me. Our horses must wonder why we laugh so much.

Sherman Oaks is in the part of Los Angeles we call "The Valley." There are fields and farms close to our place. On a day when there's a big thunderstorm, I pity a poor cow the farmer left in the meadow across the street. I tie a rope around her neck and try to pull her to

I, Marilyn

our house to dry her, but she won't follow me. As Jim is coming back just then, I ask him to push her while I pull.

"Are you nuts? Do you want cow dung on your carpet? Why don't you get an umbrella and hold it over her head?"

On week-ends, when we don't go to Sherwood lake, we take a stroll on Santa Monica beach. We go to dance halls. We visit some of Jim's friends from the factory. We go to the movies, but not as often as I used to before I was married.

Week-ends are okay, but weekdays are a little boring. The house is so small that it doesn't take that long to clean. At ten in the morning, I begin to wonder what I'll cook for Jim's dinner. I listen to the radio a lot. I often take a bus and go to see aunt Ana.

When I really feel lonely, I go into a store and buy a new dress. Jim always complains that I spend too much money on clothes, but I am sure that he earns plenty at Lockheed's. He is lucky to work there: as they make planes for the armed forces, he doesn't have to go to war.

So I buy this cute white dress with pink rosebuds printed on it. Real sexy.

"What's so special about it?" Jim asks.

"It's shrink proof."

I'm joking. I mean, the dress is so tight, it had really better be shrink proof.

"We'll see that," Jim says.

He carries me in his arms to the bathroom and holds me under the shower for a full minute. I don't know whether I want to kill him or to just laugh. I choose to laugh.

Although we got married to please other people, Jim is now my husband and so I love him. When he works on the night shift, I put a message in his lunch pail: "Dearest Daddy, when you open this I will be asleep and dreaming of you. Love and kisses. Your baby." I bet his factory pal, Bob Mitchum, is quite jealous. Jim tells me this Bob Mitchum is a big Irish fellow, but I have never seen him.

Because he is my husband, I would love him even if he smoked or drank. But in fact he doesn't. Every Sunday, we go together to the Sherman Oaks Christian Science Church. He doesn't care much about religion, but he certainly loves God the right way: he is never sick.

I've had a hard childhood, that's why I can't love God as much as Jim does. It still hurts a little when we have sex in the pull-down bed. Every month, my periods hurt a lot.

Jim also had a tough childhood. His parents were so poor during the great depression that they lived in the streets under a tent. He was a very good football player, but he had to drop

I, Marilyn

out of school to earn a living. He worked in a funeral parlor, embalming corpses and so on. I'm glad he found a better job as a worker in the airplane factory.

I tell him that sometimes I feel lonely. He suggests we move closer to his parents' house in Van Nuys, so I'll have some company. We could find a bigger house, he says, now that he has received a raise.

It is a little bigger. I don't need to fold the bed down anymore. We have a living room and a separate bedroom. The bathroom has a tub instead of a shower. I spend hours in that tub.

I spend more time cleaning the apartment, I help Mrs. Dougherty, but I still feel lonely and bored. What I like best is to go to Santa Monica and spend the afternoon swimming and getting a tan. I like to watch the fellows with the enormous arms and legs who come to train on parallel bars and to show off on "Muscle Beach," near the pier. I think that they like to look at me too. At first, they think that I'm just another young girl and they try to talk to me. But I tell them that I am a married woman and show them my wedding band, so then they leave me alone.

Incredible as it may seem, we're moving again. The Doughertys have bought a new house in North Hollywood, so we get their Van Nuys house. It has three bedrooms, plus a living room, plus a front porch. This time, cleaning will really keep me busy.

On the one hand, things seem to be turning out all right. On the other hand, there are problems with this stupid war. They are rationing gas, so we can't go to Sherwood Lake anymore. I don't get enough meat to prepare the yummy dinners Jim is used to.

We had some Japanese neighbors. That is, the parents were Japanese, but the children were born here and spoke regular English. Last week, they left because the Government is relocating them in a camp. As if they were spies or something. They didn't have anything to do with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, so why punish them?

This house suits me fine. I even have a dog now, a collie called Muggsie. Jim gave her to me for our first anniversary. She has lovely silken hair, especially just after I have shampooed her. I do it twice a week, but she doesn't seem to enjoy all the grooming and pampering.

"What are you complaining about?" I ask her. "Look at me: I wash my hair every day."

At first she was frightened of me and quite shy. But after a few days she got used to me and even sort of fell in love with me. Once, she was so happy that she licked my face. I suddenly remembered another dog I once had, named Tippy. It was shot or something. I don't

I, Marilyn

remember that many things from my childhood. The Bolenders told me that I had a grandmother who became crazy and was taken to an asylum by the cops and died there a few weeks later. Then I remembered Gladys told me her father also died in a madhouse. And now my mother is locked in an asylum too, near San Francisco. Quite a crazy family to belong to. Gosh, I hope I won't lose my mind some day.

I do feel strange sometimes... I tell aunt Ana about it:

"When I go to the beach, I get this crazy urge to take off my swimming suit and jump at one of the muscle boys. What do you think, aunt Ana? Is it wrong to sin in my mind, as long as I still love Jim and remain his faithful wife?"

"Learning to pray and love God takes a long time, Norma Jean. You may not succeed right away, but as long as you try sincerely, nothing that you do or think is wrong."

When the Bolenders told me about my family, they said Gladys had two other children before me, but Mr. Baker took them with him when he went away. They're named Jack and Berneice.

The country being at war, Jim says that he is not helping it enough in the factory. He wants to enroll in the Navy.

There is no discussing with Jim. He goes to someone his father knows in the Navy and is accepted for service on Catalina Island. As he is very keen on sports, he gets a job as an instructor in physical training for the newly recruited sailors. He doesn't really resemble the muscle boys, but he is a well-built man. He looks real handsome with his uniform.

So we move once more. The house in Van Nuys was too big anyway. At seventeen, I am moving to my fourteenth home—if I count well. Two large rooms, with a view of the ocean. Muggsie loves this place. My next door neighbor, Lynn White, says she has moved even more than me. Her husband is the master-at-arms in the cafeteria.

"There's no Navy base east, south or west of this country, she says, where we haven't lived during these last twelve years."

The sailors are very friendly with Muggsie and me. A colleague of Jim gives me instructions in weight-lifting and other physical fitness exercises. There are dances in the cafeteria every Saturday. Jim and I become quite good at the jitterbug. I dance with him and also with the other sailors. He insists on taking me home soon after midnight. I could dance all night—and the other sailors too! Jim is jealous. He says my dress is provocative. It isn't my fault if all these nice sailors find me pretty. He should be proud rather than jealous.

I, Marilyn

The war gets in the way of our happiness. The Japanese and the Germans sink many ships, so the new recruits spend less time in the base before going to sea. They skip physical training. Jim doesn't feel useful anymore. So he embarks on a navy freighter, the Julia S. DuMont, headed for Townsville, Australia.

"You go live with Mom, Norma Jean," he says.

So here I am with the Doughertys on Hermitage Street, North Hollywood, in my fifteenth home. Mr. Dougherty has retired, but Mrs. Dougherty has taken a job because they need the money. Doc Goddard found that job for her, as a nurse with the Radioplane Company in Burbank. They work for the Defense Department.

Jim's brother, Marion, has also taken a job recently. As Jim's father goes around repairing houses and building an extra wing for his daughter's bungalow, I am pretty well alone at home most of the time. With Muggsie, of course.

Well, once more I feel lonely and bored. It doesn't look like Jim will be back soon, as he is now in New Guinea, wherever that is. So I ask Mrs. Dougherty whether she could find me a job at Radioplane Company. Not only will I do something useful, but the money I'll earn will come in handy. What the Navy gives me out of Jim's pay doesn't amount to much.

On May 31, 1944, on the eve of my eighteenth birthday, I receive a cable from Jim: "Darling, on your birthday I send you a whole world of love." Muggsie doesn't understand why I cry.

I, Marilyn

5 COVER GIRL

The Radioplane Company makes target planes that anti-aircraft forces shoot at for practice. At first I pack parachutes for recovering the target planes. If I packed parachutes for people, I would be worried to death lest some guy crash on the ground because of my carelessness.

I have just quit ironing and folding shirts for the whole Dougherty family, and now I am folding parachutes eight hours a day. I ask for a transfer. They put me in the dope room. This dope is a kind of glue that we apply with brushes on the fabric covering the body and wings of the target plane. I like the job, but the girls in the dope room are very foolish. They chase men and drink alcohol and smoke and try to work as little as possible. I don't even want to talk to them.

My only friend is Ethel, that is, Mrs. Dougherty. We eat our lunch together. She gives me a black lunch box which used to belong to her husband.

On week-ends I take the Ford and drive to West Los Angeles to visit with aunt Ana. I got a driving license last year. I also go to the beach. There are not as many muscle boys as there used to be, and anyway they don't interest me as much as they used to. But Muggsie loves the beach. She enjoys it so much that I feel less guilty at leaving her at home all week.

The management of Radioplane Company is happy with me because I work better than the other girls, so they give me a certificate of excellence. I don't do anything special, but these girls are lazy and spend a lot of time chattering. One of the directors comes into the dope room with his assistant and hands me the certificate. He makes a speech, but I don't really listen to him, as I feel very uneasy on account of the girls. They're talking about me while he speaks, saying that I'm a bitch and that I sleep with him and other nasty things.

When I come home, I tell Ethel about it.

"The other girls are making life very tough for me."

"They're just jealous."

I can't help bursting into tears. Nothing ever turns out right. Already in high school, the girls didn't like me. Nobody likes me, nobody has ever liked me, except aunt Ana, but she likes everybody.

I, Marilyn

I go back to work. One of the girls pushes me while I am carrying a can of dope and it spills on the floor. I hate them. One way or another, I'll get a break and move to a better job.

I miss Jim. I love Muggsie and I love aunt Ana and I try to love God, but I am sure I would love God even better if my husband was here. We had been married for less than two years when he left. I am not twenty years old yet, but I lead the life of a widow.

This guy, David Conover, works as a photographer for the army. They want to make a photographic essay on the way women help the army by working in factories, so they send him to Radioplane Company. This will be published in a magazine I have never heard of, called *Yank*. Ronald Reagan, the actor, is in charge of that magazine.

David notices me right away and asks Ron, my foreman, whether he can choose me as his model.

"She's an excellent choice," Ron says.

The girls joke, but I don't care.

"She's so excellent that she's even got a certificate to prove it..."

"Tight sweaters are the secret of her excellence."

"Wait till you see her move her excellent ass!"

They're sorry that they won't be on the cover of *Yank Magazine*.

David photographs me putting on dope and carrying a dope can and folding parachutes. I find our blue dope-room overall quite sexy, but he also photographs me in my tightest red sweater. He stays three days at Radioplane.

Then a friend of his, Potter Heweth, calls me. He is a professional photographer, not just a soldier who takes pictures. He's seen the photographs David made for *Yank* and suggests we go to the countryside on a week-end so he could take pictures of me in the fields.

"In front of a haystack, you know, that kind of thing. You have the look of a young clean country girl."

Emmeline Snively, who has a modeling agency called Blue Book, sees the haystack pictures. She writes to me: "You're wasting your time and talent in a factory. You could be a model. Come and see me."

I ask Ethel to tell Ron I can't come because I'm sick. I drive to Hollywood, where miss Snively has her office in the Ambassador Hotel. She is a plump English lady with a wide smile. I guess she may have been a model herself long ago.

I, Marilyn

“I can teach you modeling in three months for 100 dollars, but I’ll find modeling jobs for you that will cover the costs.”

She already teaches me something. I’m wearing my tightest white dress.

“Never wear white on a modeling job,” she says. “It’s just no color.”

Mrs. Dougherty is not very happy when I tell her what has happened with miss Snively.

“Modeling? Maybe you should write to Jim and ask him about it.”

“How could I do that? It would take months. I’ve got to grab the opportunity.”

What’s bothering her, of course, is that nice girls don’t take jobs like modeling, and married women even less. But no harm can come to me as long as I love God. Actually, I’ve already done something wrong: I haven’t told miss Snively I was married. I meant to tell her, but I just forgot.

Miss Snively introduces me to a man from the Holga Steel Company, who needs a hostess at the Industrial Show. I get 10 dollars a day and it lasts ten days, so it pays for my modeling course.

Another thing is wrong: I haven’t told Radioplane that I worked at the Industrial Show. Officially, I was on sick leave. Miss Snively says I should keep my job at Radioplane for the time being.

“You’re lucky to have that security, Norma Jean. Some girls just starve because they can’t even type. Just be patient: I’ll have you out of there for good in less than six months.”

So I am back in the dope room, but I go to my modeling classes every evening after work. Driving all the way to Hollywood takes time, which means that I don’t stay at home much. This is tough on Muggsie. She cries every morning when I leave.

Conover says the Yank cover with my picture was a great success and a favorite of his boss, Ronald Reagan. I receive so many assignments and offers that I leave Radioplane for good. When I model, I get five dollars per hour, whereas at Radioplane I earned five dollars a day. Gee, it all happened so quickly!

As the Doughertys don’t approve of my modeling, staying with them is difficult. I move in with aunt Ana on Nebraska Avenue. It feels like going back home. I am sorry to leave Muggsie behind, but what else can I do?

Aunt Ana’s health worries me. She is nearly seventy and has high blood pressure. Going to Church twice a week and praying for hours in her room doesn’t seem to help. What would I become without her? Who would tell me that I always act right as long as I love God? Maybe

I, Marilyn

I would be so sad that I would die. That's what happened to Muggsie two months after I left, the Doughertys told me.

Of course I've written to Jim about my success. I'm sure he won't be angry. He knows that I am different from other girls. A lot of people do find me different: miss Snively says that all her clients want me. They photograph me for magazine covers and for a calendar. Douglas Aircraft hire me for a week at 25 dollars a day. They even send a car to the Ambassador Hotel to pick me up every morning. I pose in nightgown in the sleeping berth of their new airplane, the DC4. Lots of people come and watch on the sly. There's a rumor that work slows down in the whole factory because of me!

Miss Snively says that I may eventually find a job in the movies.

"Successful models often get contracts with one of the Studios. This pays more than photographs. This would mean security to you, Norma Jean. But you must first remember what I told you: lower your smile!"

Some important New York City guy told miss Snively that my nose was too long. She says there's nothing wrong with my nose, but maybe it's a little too close to my upper lip. If I smile while lowering my upper lip as much as possible, the shadow of my nose will seem shorter. I practice in front of my mirror every day.

"Don't you worry, Norma Jean. You're quite young. If you don't make it in the movies, you can learn typing and become a secretary, or else get married."

"But I am already married."

"Well, you can say you fooled old Snively, which is quite a feat..."

She pretends to laugh about it, but I can see she is disappointed. I feel tears welling inside me.

"Don't cry, Norma Jean. I know what it is: you were afraid to tell me."

"My husband is at sea. I lived with his parents, but they didn't approve of my modeling, so now I live with a friend."

"What does your husband think about it?"

"He isn't really negative in his letters, but I guess he doesn't like it too much."

I show her a picture of our wedding. She says that Jim has a nice Irish face.

She says I should dye my hair to become more of a blonde and better "catch the light," but I'd rather keep my natural color, since what the photographers like about me is my healthy natural appearance. I like talking with the photographers and learning stuff. I bring some pictures home and examine them carefully, then I ask them to explain what's right and what

I, Marilyn

isn't. No other girl works as much as I do, miss Snively says. I even buy anatomy books to study bone structure and understand what my body can do.

I pay 25 dollars to insert my picture in the Blue Book agency catalog. Miss Snively adds the following legend: *Height—5 feet 5 inches. Weight—118 pounds. Measurements—36, 24, 34. Hair—medium blond, too curly to manage, bleach and permanent recommended. Eyes—blue. Perfect teeth.*

In August 1945, when the war in Japan comes to a close, Jim is in a ship somewhere off the coast of Argentina. A few weeks later, he phones from New York City, but unfortunately I am not home. Aunt Ana tells him I work hard. Until then, I guess he thought my modeling was a kind of hobby, a way of passing time while waiting for him. He decides there and then to resign from the Navy and fly straight to Los Angeles, but they don't let him. Although the war is over, they need the ship and its crew to bring the troops home from Europe and wherever.

All he gets is a twelve-day leave. His skin is kind of yellow because of a sickness he caught in New Guinea. I kiss him and it feels good.

He scolds me because I owe money for dresses and shoes and make-up and what not. What the Navy sent me should have been enough, he thought. He saved 300 dollars and intended to spend most of it having fun, but once the bills are paid, there won't be much left.

"In this job," I tell him, "they pay higher fees if you're dressed well."

"Sure, Norma Jean, I understand. It's such a fantastic job that you must pay to practice it."

I feel guilty and sorry and I cry.

"I know it's a lot of money, Jim. Please believe me, I'll make it up to you in some way."

All kinds of people seem to be coming back to Los Angeles. Grace and Doc Goddard have just arrived from West Virginia. Grace tells me that Gladys is well enough to leave the asylum. She's coming to stay with her for a while.

Jim and I go to the Greyhound terminal with the Goddards. Among us, Grace is the only person who could recognize Gladys. I certainly could not: the white-dressed woman who steps down from the bus after all the other passengers is a complete stranger to me. She doesn't recognize me either, but what else would you expect? I just can't kiss her or even touch her. She shakes hands with Jim, though. After a few minutes, I notice that I can't even recall the faint memory I had of her, as if her sudden popping up from oblivion had cancelled it. This loss makes me very sorry.

I, Marilyn

As she's staying with the Goddards, we all have dinner there. Grace tells us about West Virginia, mainly to avoid a painful silence. It seems that my friend Beebe has married, but picked up the wrong man.

I promise Gladys I'll come and see her as soon as Jim is back at sea—that is, in a couple weeks or so.

I am delighted to have Jim here with me, but he isn't. He is afraid I'll meet some handsome photographer and leave him for good.

"These guys are slick talkers with lots of dough. You'll fall for one of them while I'm in Europe and I won't be able to do anything about it. He'll make you unhappy and you'll regret it, but then it will be too late for us."

The name of the handsome photographer is André de Dienes. He is Hungarian. Not that handsome, actually. No slick talk, no dough, but he kisses my hand and sends me flowers, which is what they do over there in Europe. He is the first European person I meet. He eats with his left hand and tells me they all do. He uses some kind of scented cologne. His voice is not as loud as an American's, his hair is longer, his feet are shorter. He speaks with an accent similar to Count Dracula's. He is thirty-two.

The first thing he asks me is:

"Will you pose in the nude?"

I don't know what to answer, being a married woman. These European guys can read your thoughts.

"It doesn't have to be now," he says. "You can take your time and think about it before you give me an answer."

So he photographs me on the beach in a bathing suit. He drives me out of town and photographs me in a meadow with a lamb in my arms.

And then he sends flowers and comes to have dinner with us and kisses Gladys's hand. I have lived with Gladys since Jim left. It so happened that the apartment under Ana's became vacant, so I rented it for both of us. She stays at home most of the time. Once, she went to Hollywood and called on miss Snively. Maybe she was afraid that this modeling agency was a front and I had become a hooker. I am pretty sure that some girls are hustling on the side, but miss Snively convinced her that it was a straight operation. What else would she say? She beamed her friendly smile on Gladys:

"This is a model agency, not a call-girls' network. Of course, the girls do what they want with the photographers after work or during work. That's none of my business."

I, Marilyn

Gladys thanked her.

“You’ve been very good for Norma Jean. You’ve given her a whole new life.”

During the dinner, André asks Gladys whether he could take me on a week-long camping trip. His big idea is to photograph me in the nude in the kind of landscape you see in Western movies. She could hardly refuse, since I am going to be twenty-one in a few months, and obviously she isn’t much of a mother to me. Grace Goddard is still my legal guardian, anyway. But I can see she feels uneasy. She has become a Christian Scientist in her San Francisco asylum (she didn’t know I was one too) and takes religion very seriously. Her Christian Science seems to be different from Ana’s. She doesn’t believe that everything you do is all right as long as you love God.

The week-long trip lasts a month. We go to San Francisco and up North to redwood country, to Oregon, to the Yosemite forest and to many other places which I had so far seen only in the movies. At first, we always take separate cabins, but then one night there is only one bedroom at a lodge in the mountains. Although it is snowing, I beg André to drive on. As he is a very polite gentleman who respects the will of a lady even when she is not a lady, he obeys me. But then the next place also offers us one small room.

“Listen, Norma Jean, we can’t drive on in this snow storm. Why don’t you take the bedroom... I’ll sleep in the lobby.”

“There is no bed in the lobby. I don’t want you to sleep on the floor... Come on in.”

I decide to consider this strange replay a sign from Fate. Besides, a girl would really have to be strong-minded to refuse going to bed with one of these nice European fellows when circumstances make it unavoidable. I’m going to divorce Jim anyway. Miss Snively says I must be single if I want to sign a contract with one of the studios.

André proposes to me. I don’t say no, because I don’t want to ruin our Western trip. But I’m careful not to say yes either.

“Let me divorce first, then we’ll see what we do.”

When he photographs me, I try to imagine I’m in love with the lens, because it makes me prettier and more desirable. Maybe André thinks I’m in love with him. Miss Snively says my best asset is the way I move my body. Even if the photographs are already quite sexy, I’ll seem more sensual when they film me.

At least I’m having a good time. I discover wonderful landscapes. We drive and hike and climb all over the place, and André takes millions of pictures of me. We’ve agreed that, as a compensation for my taking off my clothes every night, he would give up his idea of

I, Marilyn

photographing me in the nude. I don't want aunt Ana or Gladys, not to mention Jim, to see me naked in magazines or on posters.

Miss Snively gives me the address of an attorney she knows in Las Vegas. I spend six weeks there to get a divorce.

The man sends a letter to Jim, who's in China somewhere, to tell him that the divorce will be decreed *in absentia* (or something) unless he shows up.

As for me, I write to miss Snively.

"Las Vegas, Nev. May 25th, 1946.

Dear Miss Snively,

I'm having lots of rest and I'm getting tan. It's very warm and honestly the sun shines all the time. Las Vegas is really a colorful town with the Helldorado celebration and all. It lasted for five days, they had rodeos and parades every day.

Roy Rogers was in town making a picture. I met him and rode his horse "Trigger" (cross my heart I did!). What a horse!

I was walking down the street one day last week and noticed they were shooting a movie so like everyone else I stood and watched. In between shootings a couple of fellows from Republic Studio walked over to me and asked me if I would please come over and meet some actor (I don't remember his name. I think his last name was Cristy or something like that). Anyway he wanted to meet me so I did and I met most of the studio people including Roy Rogers and I rode his horse, gee he is nice.

They asked me to have dinner with them at the Last Frontier and then we went to the rodeo. What a day! Ever since I've been signing autograph books and cowboy hats. When I try to tell these kids I'm not in pictures they think I'm just trying to avoid signing their books, so I sign them. They've gone now. It's quite lonely here in Las Vegas. This is certainly a wild town.

Miss Snively, I would love to hear from you and hear what's new.

Please give my best regards to Mrs. Snively and Miss Smith, also to Dick Miller if you see him. I hope he has been able to sell some of those pictures, he is so nice.

Is John Randolph or Paul Parry back in town yet? How's Mr. Bloom? I wonder if Eccleston Agency is ever going to pay me? Do you ever hear from Mr. Willinger about me?

I didn't know six weeks could pass so slowly. I will write again soon.

Love,

Norma Jean."

I, Marilyn

When I come back home from Las Vegas, I find a very nervous Gladys. The situation is too much for her. First my trip with André, then my divorce. She leaves and goes back to the sanatorium. She stayed seven months. We had never lived so long together. When I was a kid, I was sad whenever she went away. Now I'm sad but also relieved. At the same time, I feel guilty: maybe she's returning to the asylum because I haven't taken good care of her.

6 A NEW NAME

In July 1946, one month after my return from Las Vegas, miss Snively introduces me to one of her friends, Helen Ainsworth. She also has an agency, the National Concerts Artists Corporation, specialized in representing actors for the movies. I get my own agent, Harry Lipton. He says my character seems fragile, due to my hectic childhood, which makes me different. This means it's a good thing.

He sets an appointment for me at the Twentieth Century-Fox, the biggest studio in the movies. Harry says they shoot seventy-five movies every year. Their building rises like a fortress in the middle of Los Angeles. When you walk in, you go through a kind of huge gate, then you enter a full-sized city, except certain streets look like they belong in Manhattan and others in a small Western city. I feel foolish: at first I see real houses, but in fact they're just fronts held in place by scaffolding.

I meet Ben Lyon, the casting director. I shoot a film test on the set of a Betty Grable movie after most of the crew is gone. They just ask me to walk around. I roll my hips the way I've done ever since I was thirteen or so when I wanted men to look at me. Whitey Snider, Miss Grable's make-up artist, tells me I've got too much make-up on.

"You don't need to paste such a thick layer of stuff on your face. Movies is different from still photographs."

I feel very nervous. I stammer when I talk to Ben Lyon or Whitey Snider. I'm lucky this is a silent test. The cameraman says I'm fine: charming and sexy. What matters in the movies is to express things visually. This suits me fine, as I know I can attract men without saying a word.

On August 26, 1946, Ben Lyon shows the test to the big boss, Darryl F. Zanuck.

"Who's this gorgeous babe?" Zanuck asks.

"Norma Jean Dougherty, a model."

"Is she under contract with us?"

"We have an option. That's why I shot this test."

"Well, exercise the option and sign her."

I, Marilyn

When Ben Lyon tells me the good news, I'm so happy that I cry. I will become a movie star! No more selling liquid wax, no more cooking carrots and ironing a husband's shirts. Maybe my life will turn out okay, after all. I feel I've spent twenty years in jail, looking at a locked door. Now the door suddenly opens. What a break!

I sign a six-month contract at 75 dollars per week. This sum will be doubled if the contract is renewed. I need Grace Goddard's authorization, as I am still under age. She is quite proud for me:

"I always said you'd become a great star, Norma Jean, like Jean Harlow."

Mr. Lyon says Norma Jean Dougherty is no name for a movie actress. It's too long and too ugly. What's more, nobody knows how to pronounce Dougherty. Dog Artie? Doe Artee? Doffertee? Miss Snively had said it too. She sometimes introduced me as "Jean Norman." Mr. Lyon suggests "Carole Lind." Then he remembers a theater actress he knew in New York City, Marilyn Miller.

"You look like her, really. As she died long ago, she won't mind if you take her name."

"I like the first name, Marilyn, but it bothers me to steal someone's last name, even though she's dead. What about my mother's maiden name, Monroe?"

"Marilyn Monroe? That's perfect. From now on, you're Marilyn Monroe."

When I come home, I regret my decision. I didn't want to say no to Mr. Lyon, so I pretended I liked Marilyn, but in fact I find this name ridiculous. I'd rather be Jean Monroe. Well, it's too late now.

I can't become a star right away, obviously. The Twentieth Century-Fox sends me to theater class at Actors Lab, where the teachers are two New York actors, Morris and Phoebe Carnovsky. Photographers photograph me. I attend "events" with other Fox starlets, for instance movie premieres, restaurant or supermarket openings, golf tournaments. There are several dozens of us. Sometimes I have to wear a ridiculous low-cut dress and serve drinks and cigarettes with the other girls when the bosses play cards. They call us "the Gin Rummy Girls." I don't work much, actually. I do come to the studio every day. I visit all the departments and try to learn about costumes and lighting and stuff. Whitey Snyder, the make-up guy, remembers me and gives me some advice. He explains how I should make up my face for black and white and for color, for indoor and for outdoor. Although I haven't shot a single reel, the studio renews my contract after six months. Thus, I now earn 100 dollars a week.

I, Marilyn

The first semester may have been a kind of training period. At the beginning of the second semester, I get my first movie part at last, in *Scudda Hoo! Scudda Hay!* The star of this farm comedy is June Haver, but there are also plenty of cows and pigs and especially mules, who're supposed to move forward when you shout *Scudda Hoo!* I play a peasant girl who rows June Haver across a pond, but my scene "falls on the cutting-room floor," as they say, except for about half a second. I'm quite disappointed, you bet! A stupid editor can decide of my future. How unfair...

Nobody knows my mother was a movie editor. Neither do they know she's still alive, locked up inside a lunatic asylum.

Well, I come to the studio every morning, taking great care not to wear the same dress two days on a row. I'm not as shy as when I used to go to Muscle Beach and avoided talking to the guys, so now I'm beginning to know lots of people: prop men, cameramen, sound engineers, directors' assistants, other actors and actresses. I think all the fellows in the press know me. There are two kinds: those I have already gone out with, those I haven't gone out with yet.

One day, a huge limousine stops by me. Mr. Schenck, one the studio heads, rolls his window down.

"Who are you, my dear?"

"My name is Marilyn Monroe, sir."

"Are you a Fox employee?"

"I have a 100-dollars-a-week contract as an actress."

"Here's my card. Come to my place for dinner next Tuesday."

"Yes, Mr. Schenck."

"Call me Joe. Everybody does."

I spend several evenings in Mr. Schenck's great house in Bel Air, but it's not as if we were just the two of us and he was trying to seduce me or something. He is at least seventy and looks like a fat Buddha. He likes to have pretty girls around the table when he gives a dinner party, that's all. Or maybe that's not all. I think he's really interested in me, as if I was his granddaughter. We do dine together just the two of us, after a while. He says I'll certainly succeed in the movies. This boosts my self-confidence, which tends to be rather low. I often dread that my dream will vanish and I'll turn back into Norma Jean Dougherty. Thousands of starlets hope they'll become great stars. I must not think about them. I tell myself that nobody dreams as hard as I do.

I, Marilyn

Everybody says I'm Joe's lover, but I don't care. Even if I become his lover, it will be because I like him rather than because I'm ambitious. Miss Snively used to say I didn't need to sleep with all the guys, like the other girls, because I have enough talent not to need it.

Long ago, Joe Schenck was married to Norma Talmadge, but he doesn't know that my mother gave me his first wife's name...

"She started this whole footprint rigmarole in front of Grauman's Chinese Theater," he tells me, "when she stepped on a patch of wet cement by mistake."

Towards the end of my second semester, I play a waitress in *Dangerous Years*, directed by Arthur Pierson. I appear on screen for several minutes, and even in close-up! I've bleached my hair, as Miss Snively had advised. Norma Jean Dougherty had auburn hair, but Marilyn Monroe is blond.

Although Arthur Pierson says I'm fine in his film, Fox kicks me out! They don't renew my contract. Now it's true people haven't seen me in *Dangerous Years*, as the editing isn't over yet. I try to talk to Mr. Zanuck, but his secretary always says he's playing golf, so I can't see him. Oh Gosh, it ain't right!

So I'm back where I started one year ago. Miss Snively books me for magazine covers and other photographs. I live in a rented room. I earn very little. I still attend courses at the Actors Lab, but the studio isn't paying for them anymore. The Carnovskys say I can pay later. Harry Lipton is still my agent for the movies. I call every day to ask him whether he found a part for me.

On many a day, I eat a hot dog and nothing else. I'm lucky that Joe Schenck invites me for dinner now and then. He can't help me at Fox, because he's half retired, but he still wants to help me.

"I think you shouldn't give up on the movies, he says. I'll talk to Harry Cohn about you."

Mr. Cohn is the boss of the Columbia studio. Like Joe Schenck, Sam Goldwyn, Louis B. Mayer, the Warner brothers, he is one of the founders of Hollywood. They all came from Russia at the turn of the century. They wanted to make it in the theater business in New York City, but it was such a crowded field that they moved to California. Joe often plays poker with Harry Cohn. He tells him about me. Harry Cohn says Max Arnow, the Columbia's casting director, will take care of it. On March 1st, 1948, six months after leaving Fox, I sign a contract with Columbia.

I now live with John Carroll and his wife, Lucille Ryman. He's an actor who played the lead in several movies. She's a talent scout for the Metro Goldwyn Mayer studio, which

I, Marilyn

means she finds new actors for them. They gave me shelter when I was out of work. They believe in me. They lent me money so I could pay the Carnovskys. I sign an agreement saying I consider John my official manager. Harry Lipton doesn't approve, but many actresses have an agent and a manager at the same time.

I can't really spend the rest of my life with them. Lucille is becoming edgy. She suspects me of wanting to steal her husband, I think. I rent a house in Hollywood, but it is so old that I'm afraid it will fall down on me, so I move to the Bel Air hotel, then to the Beverly Carlton. As Columbia only pays 125 dollars per week, I can't afford these expensive places. I live in a motel, then I settle in the Studio Club, a women's residence in Hollywood, near the Paramount studios. I share a room with another starlet, Clarice Evans. John and Lucille deposit the first six months of rent. I bring my books, my bike, my professional hair dryer, my pictures of Clark Gable and Abe Lincoln. Clarice Evans is surprised that I read books. What does she think I am? Stupid?

Okay, let's say foolish, maybe... As I've never been able to juggle numbers, I just can't keep what I spend within the bounds of what I earn. I always owe money. Gee, I don't know how other people manage their finances.

Can't even pay a full rent. After Clarice Evans, I share the room with Shelley Winters, another young actress.

Columbia wants me to take singing lessons. This will allow me to play in musicals. My teacher, Fred Karger, is the sweetest man. He has thick blond hair, large velvety eyes, a warm smile. He doesn't laugh when he hears my thin tinny voice. He says I need to extend my register upwards and downwards and to sing louder. But first, I must learn to breathe and to open my mouth. I thought I knew how to breathe and to open my mouth. Otherwise, how could I live and eat?

Actually, he notices I eat very little. I want to save money and repay my debts. He invites me for dinner in his home. He lives with three women: Terry, Mary and Ann—his daughter, sister and mother.

Ann Karger kisses me. Everybody calls her Nana. She says I can come to dinner whenever I want. Really? All right, then. I come every evening (except when I eat at Joe's). I'm in love with Freddy. He could play a prince in the movies. He dresses so very carefully... He is as conscious of his appearance as a woman. I think we're made for each other. We'll marry, I'm sure. He is divorced from his wife. He says that he wants to stay free, that we can love each

I, Marilyn

other without getting married. I believe that real love is for life. Nana also says he should marry me.

He takes me to the beach, to a dance, to the best restaurants. We go to the Hollywood Bowl and listen to classical music concerts that bore me to death. He plays the piano for me. We're happy together, but he is afraid of committing himself to a long term relationship. When I try to convince him we should go ahead, his fright increases. Obviously, he doesn't love me as much as I love him. He often criticizes me. He says I don't think enough and cry too much. He pretends I wouldn't be a good mother for his daughter.

"You're made for the movies, Marilyn, not for housekeeping. You don't inhabit the real world, but some kind of dreamland. Often, you behave like a sleepwalker. How could you cook and sweep the dust and choose a school and supervise her homework?"

So we decide to call it quits. If he refuses to consider a common future, I won't go out with him anymore. I keep him as a music teacher and his mother as a close friend.

Is it because he is a very good teacher or because I was in love with him? I make good progress. When he records me on the studio equipment and lets me hear my voice, I hardly believe my own ears: I sound like a professional singer. Indeed, a Columbia producer, Harry Romm, gives me the second best part in a musical, *Ladies of the Chorus*.

Mr. Romm and Max Arnow, the casting director, agree that I sing well enough, but that I still need to improve my acting. They ask Natasha Lytess, Columbia's head coach, to help me.

I meet Mrs. Lytess. I find her rather frightening. She is very tall and thin. She has wild gray hair, black eyes that shoot darts at you, a harsh German accent. I think she's angry because I'm late. As this first lesson mattered a lot to me, I went to the hairdresser.

By and by, we get used to each other. She studied theater in Berlin with Max Reinhardt.

"The man had the best company in the world, she says, but we had to leave when the Nazis came to power. Everybody was either Jewish or queer..."

She owns a whole library of books about the theater. She lends me some Chekov plays and Dostoyevsky novels.

She speaks with a steady voice, without ever hesitating. She knows what she wants to say. I always find her opinions quite convincing when she utters them, but later, I sometimes think I was wrong not to talk back to her. Like Fred, she says I should open my mouth and speak louder. So what was I so far? Some kind of ventriloquist who spoke out of a closed mouth?

I, Marilyn

She says the secret of a clear delivery is emphasis on consonants. I feel that if I followed her advice exactly, I would end up speaking with her German accent...

In *Ladies of the Chorus*, I play a chorus girl who meets a rich young man. As he belongs to the upper reaches of society, his mother opposes the romance, but it turns out okay in the end. Natasha tells me this is a variation on the Cinderella story. I sing *Every Baby needs a Da Da Daddy*.

When the film comes to theaters, I see my name on a marquee in Westwood: Marilyn Monroe! This is the first time. I drive by, several times a day, in the Ford convertible I just bought. I'm so happy! A feeling of elation prickles me from head to foot. I want to shout for joy!

Three weeks later, in September 1948, grief replaces happiness once again. Am I cursed or what? Columbia doesn't renew my contract. Harry Cohn says I can't act, it seems. According to Lucille Ryman, Columbia doesn't need another blonde, as they already have Rita Hayworth. Same thing at Fox with Betty Grable and at MGM with Lana Turner.

Alone and forsaken. I'm used to it. I seek comfort with Nana Karger, Lucille Ryman and Natasha Lytess, but Aunt Ana can't help me anymore, as she just died of a heart attack. She was 68. While I didn't spend as much time with her as when I was Norma Jean Dougherty, she was the only person who really really loved me. She convinced me that God's generosity is unlimited. As long as she was alive, I sometimes remembered Norma Jean.

My agent, Harry Lipton, takes better care of me now that he's competing with John Carroll and Lucille Ryman. In 1949, he shows my reels in the first two movies to Lester Cowan, who is producing a Marx Brothers comedy, *Love Happy*. Groucho Marx accepts to see me.

"Can you walk?" he asks.

"I learned when I was one year old."

"Yeah, but can you walk in such manner that smoke will shoot out of my nostrils?"

That's precisely what I can do. I roll my hips across the room. Groucho dispels the smoke in front of his nose with his hand.

"You're in, lady."

"Don't walk in the street like this," Harpo says. Gee, I thought he was mute.

In the film, Groucho plays a detective. I enter his office, as if I was a client looking for help.

"What seems to be the trouble?" he asks.

"Some men are following me."

"Really? I can't understand why!"

I, Marilyn

I spend less than a minute on screen, but this isn't a low-budget flick like *Dangerous years* and *Ladies of the Chorus*. The budget is so high that the producers send me on a promotional tour around the States. I borrow money to buy a white leather suitcase and a vanity case for my make-up stuff. I enjoy the silky wood paneling and smooth sheets of first-class sleeping cars, the china plates and silver cutlery of the dining-car. Luxury suits me fine!

I discover New York City. I couldn't live there: the skyscrapers are so high that you never see the sun. Even without any sun, the place is hotter than Los Angeles. I boil in the wool dresses I brought on my trip. The New York papers publish a picture where I'm fanning myself with a magazine. The picture's caption says: "Marilyn Monroe, a new hot starlet." I buy light cotton dresses that put my shape to better advantage.

André de Dienes lives in New York City. He photographs me on Jones Beach for the sake of old times. I feel a wave of warm nostalgia when I see his shock of unruly hair and smell his European perfume.

Back in Los Angeles, another guy takes pictures of me. I'm driving my Ford convertible on Sunset Boulevard. As I'm going to a modeling appointment, I check my make-up in the rear-view mirror so that, well, I don't notice the car in front of me has stopped and I crash into it. I wasn't speeding or anything and nobody's hurt, thank God, but the Ford refuses to start again. Some fellows help me push it to the side. One of them gives me his card.

"Tom Kelley, photographer? Gee, I'm a model."

"I know."

"How do you know?"

"The portfolio on the passenger seat..."

"Oh. I'm Marilyn Monroe."

"Well, miss Monroe, give me a call some time. I could take a few shots of you, maybe."

He lends me five dollars, because I don't have any money for the taxi ride to my appointment. I must pay these monthly installments on my car, so I call Mr. Kelley a few days later.

"Yes, miss Monroe, I remember you quite well. Did you have your car fixed?"

"My agent took care of it."

"You're in luck. I've got to make a picture for a beer poster, but the girl just told me she was sick and couldn't come."

So I go to his studio. Wearing a swimsuit and carrying a beach ball, I become the new Pabst Beer girl. The following month, Tom Kelley calls me.

I, Marilyn

“A fellow who prints calendars in Chicago or someplace says he saw you in the beer ad and would like you in a calendar.”

“A calendar? Sure.”

“He wants nude pictures. Nothing vulgar, of course. He trusts me to make them artful, you know.”

“Why not?”

Tom Kelley spreads a red drape on the floor of his studio. I lie on the drape. He climbs upon a ladder to photograph me from above. The Chicago man prints two of the pictures in his calendar. The first one is captioned “A New Wrinkle,” the second one “Golden Dreams.” I receive fifty dollars.

My pals of the press have mentioned my previous roles here and there. When *Love Happy* is released, Louella Parsons, the great Hollywood gossip columnist, writes about me for the first time! She says I’m a poor orphan raised in a dozen foster families “right here in Hollywood.” I hope Gladys won’t send a letter to her from her asylum.

Another person noticed me in *Love Happy*: Johnny Hyde, one of the most influent agents in the movie business. He calls Harry Lipton and offers to buy my contract in the name of the famous William Morris agency. How could Harry refuse? His company, National Concert Artists Corporation, is quite small and doesn’t handle well-known actors, not to mention stars. Besides, he likes me and wants me to succeed. Mr. Hyde brought Betty Hutton and Rita Hayworth to stardom.

As soon as I meet Mr. Hyde, I feel he’s going to help me more than anyone did so far. He is really tiny and seems rather fragile. I expect his voice to sound like a little boy’s, but it is low and powerful. He speaks with a trace of an accent, as he’s born in Russia, where his name was Ivan Haidabura. He came to the States when he was ten years old. He is now fifty or so. He has a touch of the refined and savvy European guy about him, like André de Dienes.

Here I am, signing our contract in his office.

“You’ll become a great star,” he says.

“Wow! I love to hear you say that, but right now, I owe money on my car and I can’t pay my phone bill.”

“Plenty future stars sat right where you are, miss Monroe. I discovered Lana Turner. You have more potential than she had, I tell you. You’ll go far, it’s a cinch.”

His secretary seems bewildered when he tells her he’s taking the afternoon off to be with me.

I, Marilyn

“I’ll call later,” he says.

We eat lunch at Romanoff’s, a swell restaurant. He introduces me to Mike Romanoff, whom everybody calls Prince Romanoff (although Johnny says he’s no prince), and to his wife Gloria. Then he spends several thousand dollars to buy dresses and shoes for me in the best Beverly Hills stores. I hope to become a star some day, but I’m not so sure. Johnny doesn’t doubt. He really believes in me.

He is a sweet man. He’s in love with me and wants to marry me.

“But, Johnny, you’re married already!”

He has a heart condition. He could collapse and die any minute. Even if he was free, I wouldn’t marry him. I want to spend many years with my husband, have children and raise them with him. If I marry Johnny and he dies, people will say I caught him in my net to inherit his money.

He leaves his wife and finds a gorgeous house in Beverly Hill, right on North Palm Drive. Although I don’t love him as much as Freddy Karger, I like him enough to move in with him. Gee, we have a cook, a butler and a chauffeur!

He sends me to a surgeon who improves my looks. Although I tried to follow Miss Snively’s advice and lower my smile, my nose was really too long.

When Harry Lipton became jealous of John Carroll and Lucille Ryman, he found me a part in *Love Happy*. Now that the best agent in town is taking care of my career, Lucille Ryman tries to outdo him and sends me to a casting call at Metro Goldwyn Mayer. They want a blonde to play a shady lawyer’s young mistress in a gangster film to be directed by John Huston, *Asphalt Jungle*.

I read the script and spend a week rehearsing with Natasha. She drives me to the huge MGM lot in Culver City. John Huston says he saw me at Columbia, but I don’t remember him. He’s a tall Irish fellow, who reminds me of my husband, Jim Dougherty. He asks me to play a scene where I’m lying languidly on a couch, but there is no couch so I just sit on the floor. Mr. Huston’s assistant plays the lawyer. Mr. Huston doesn’t talk much.

“Okay,” he says.

Mr. Huston is a well-known director. He made *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. I’ve never played such an important part. I’m scared. He accepted me too easily. Lucille says he’s a playboy who spends thousands gambling and playing the horses. He borrows money from all his friends. He owes 20,000 dollars to John and Lucille. He gave me the part to mollify them. Thus, my test didn’t prove I’ll be able to play the role. Posing for

I, Marilyn

photographers is easy. Learning dialogue and saying it in a natural way is much tougher. What if I fail? My career will crumble before it's even started. I don't sleep anymore.

When I arrive on the set for the first day of shooting, Mr. Huston notices I'm nervous. He comes to me and points to Louis Calhern, who plays the crooked lawyer:

"See how he shakes! If you weren't nervous, you could as well give up this job."

The film is released in 1950. I get some good reviews. Most of the really influent film critics seem not to notice me, though. Johnny says I still have much to learn, but I'm on the right track.

"You must be careful to choose roles that will help your career," he says. "Working with a good director like John Huston is worth plenty. A good cameraman is even more important. Whatever talent you've got, you can't do much about it within the next hour, but you can always change the lighting on your face."

He gets small parts for me in two MGM movies, *Right Cross* and *Home Town Story*. Then he introduces me to Joe Mankiewicz, a writer who is going to direct a film called *All About Eve*. Everybody expects him to become a first-rate director, as he just received an Oscar as a writer. This Eve, played by the great Bette Davis, is supposed to be a famous theater actress who feels threatened by a younger rival. This part, I mean the younger rival, seems just right for me.

"Yeah, you did a good job in *Asphalt Jungle*," Mr. Mankiewicz says.

As the film is going to be produced by Fox, Johnny asks Joe Schenck to put in a word for me. So I'm back at my old studio—for just a week, most of it not even in Los Angeles but on location in San Francisco. We stay in a big hotel there. Mr. Mankiewicz and the leading actors, Bette Davis and George Sanders (he is a very cynical Englishman), talk about books and stuff at dinner. I feel pretty stupid. As soon as the shooting is over, I enroll in a literature course for adults at UCLA in Westwood. I go every Tuesday evening. Our teacher, Claire, is really nice.

Once more, the movie gets good reviews, George Sanders even receives an Oscar for best supporting actor, but the main critics fail to mention me.

Fate has another of its nasty tricks in store for me. Why does it hate me so much?

I've got this nice relationship going with Johnny, I live in a grand house with him. My career is moving forward slowly but steadily. Not fast enough, Johnny says. He rushes around town, urging producers and directors to consider me. People say he's neglecting his other clients.

I, Marilyn

“I’ll launch your career for good while I can still do it, Marilyn.”

His heart disagrees. You take care of me first, his heart says. Johnny spends more and more time in the hospital. In November 1950, although he’s so weak that the chauffeur has to carry him out of the car, he gets an appointment with Darryl Zanuck and convinces him to offer me a seven-year contract at Fox. I’ll earn 500 dollars per week the first year, then 750 the second year. Ten times more than when I began four years ago! Mr. Zanuck also agrees to hire Natasha Lytess as my coach at 500 dollars per week.

On December 18, 1950, Johnny dies after a series of heart attacks. One more person deserts me. We’ve spent a little over one year together. On the very next day, his family sends a lawyer who expels me from the house and tells me I’d better not come at the funeral. They pretend I killed Johnny, since he worked on my career instead of resting. Isn’t this a cruel thing to say? Can’t they understand how sad I am? What will I become without Johnny?

I take refuge at Natasha’s. She gives me a large glass of whisky and some pills to soothe me. I want to die. She guesses how I feel and stays near me, lest I do something foolish.

Actually, Johnny told some close friends that I should be treated like family, so these friends take me to the funeral. I sob like a child. I can’t help throwing myself at the casket before the undertakers close the lid forever. Is he really dead? Maybe he’ll sit up and call me one last time with his beautiful deep voice: “Hi, Marilyn, baby...”

“Johnny, Johnny, come back!” I shout.

I look foolish, I know, but I don’t care.

I, Marilyn

7 STAR

I shoot several low-budget flicks for Fox: *As Young As You Feel*, *Love Nest*, *Let's Make it Legal* (with Claudette Colbert, whom I admired so much when I was a child), *We're Not Married*, *Don't Bother To Knock* (with Richard Widmark), *O. Henry's Full House* (with the great English actor Charles Laughton), *Monkey Business* (directed by Howard Hawks, with Cary Grant and Ginger Rogers). I'm often billed as "co-star," with my name in big letters, but I'm sure I'd play in better movies if Johnny was still alive. Besides, they might stop casting me as a stupid blonde.

"Try to see the positive side," Natasha says. "With every new film, you improve your acting skills and gain experience."

She attends all my shootings. She helps me rehearse my scenes. She gives me useful advice. I need her to overcome stage fright. I can't expect the producers or directors to teach me anything. They only want me to be sexy.

We adopt a kind of code. Natasha points to her mouth when she thinks I should speak louder, bends her hand if my back isn't straight enough. The fellows in the technical crew laugh at me. They say I keep looking at Natasha to get her approval. They're jealous because their name never appears in neon letters anywhere.

In *Monkey Business*, I play a comical part: the blond secretary of this rich old guy, played by Charles Coburn (he reminds me of Joe Schenck), who hopes Cary Grant is going to find a youth elixir. Gee, this movie is really funny. I was glad to work with Howard Hawks. Johnny put his name near the top when he wrote a list of the best directors. He made *Scarface*, *To Have And Have Not*, *The Big Sleep* and many other famous films.

When I shoot *As Young As You Feel*, two friends of Harmon Jones, the director, come on the set to say hello. The first one is another director, Elia Kazan, who just made *A Streetcar Named Desire* with a new young star, Marlon Brando. The second friend, Arthur Miller, is a playwright who wrote a famous play, *Death Of A Salesman*. He is very tall and slender and wears glasses like a professor. He reminds me of President Lincoln (except for the glasses). As soon as we look at each other, we fall in love. They call this "love at first sight."

I, Marilyn

I keep forgetting that happiness isn't for me. Love or no love, Arthur Miller must go back to New York City. He is married, he has kids, he works on Broadway. I can't leave Hollywood, of course, if I want my career to keep inching forward.

I wonder whether I can count on Fox to further my career. They did give me a crisp dramatic part, as a crazy babysitter, in *Don't Bother To Knock*, but I have to wait until they lend me to RKO for the critics to discover I can really act. The film is *Clash By Night*, directed by a German oldster, Fritz Lang. I play a girl canning sardines in Monterey. It should be easy: I just have to remember the Radioplane factory, where I folded parachutes and pasted glue during the war. If only Mr. Lang wasn't so nasty! Natasha told me of his bad reputation. He doesn't want her around, actually. They quarrel in German a lot.

So then I go back to Fox, but in spite of the good reviews in the leading newspapers they still want me to play dumb blondes. I'm sure Mr. Zanuck doesn't like me. When Johnny died, I lost my only influent friend in Hollywood.

But what do you know? I become famous all of a sudden in 1952. Gosh, this is really unexpected. It all begins when Aline Mosby, the journalist who covers Hollywood for the United Press agency, sees a 1951 calendar on the wall of a garage. Hey, who's this swell "miss Golden Dreams"? She looks like Marilyn Monroe, doesn't she? Actually, the truck drivers liked the 1950 calendar so much that the publisher used my pictures again the next year. Young promising actresses do not make nude pictures. The movie business is really crazy. In Hollywood, everybody goes to bed with everybody else, but in movies you never see two people in a bedroom unless they're married to each other. What's more, there are two separate beds in the room and the people, even though they're lawfully married, seem to keep their pajamas or nightgowns on when they go to bed. Otherwise the "Legion of Decency" and other crazies raise such a ruckus that the film is bound to fail.

So what? I'm that gorgeous creature on the red drape, miss Golden Dreams. Why would I lie? I'm not ashamed of my body. The Fox public relations department loves the free publicity and tries to make the most of it. They call Aline Mosby, saying she ought to interview the poor Hollywood orphan.

"Yes, I made those nudie pictures," I tell her. "At the time, I had no money for food or rent. The photographer was a swell guy. His wife was there all the time, actually. It was to be an art calendar. Now they say it may ruin my career. Isn't this unfair?"

I wasn't really starving, but the story does sound better than having to pay the installments on my new convertible! I'm lucky that Aline Mosby doesn't belong to the Legions of

I, Marilyn

Decency. She became famous herself last year by going naked to report on a nudists' convention.

All the newspapers talk about me. A new magazine, *Playboy*, publishes my pictures in its first issue—one on its cover, one as a luscious center spread. People who do not like the human body rant and rave. The States of Pennsylvania and Georgia censor the calendar. So many journalists look into my life and my work that one of them finds about Gladys. It doesn't really matter, now. I mean, the story gets lost in the overflow of true and not so true stuff they publish about me. Instead of being a poor orphan, I am a poor forsaken child who's ashamed of her crazy mother.

Thousands of letters come to Fox every week, requesting pictures of me. The good soldiers who're making war in Korea want to post me near their bed. The mail bureau says I'm the troops' number one favorite, way ahead of Betty Grable and June Haver. A whole regiment stationed over there offers to marry me... Several magazines write cover stories about me. They call me the new Jean Harlow, they compare me to Lana Turner and Rita Hayworth.

Joe DiMaggio wants to know me. Seems he liked a picture in a magazine where I wore a baseball outfit. As he is the most famous player in the world (even though he retired last year), the Fox people set up a meeting so they can publish some photographs: "Marilyn Monroe, the rising star, with the great Joe DiMaggio." Well, the last time I had anything to do with baseball was when I left second base and the Los Angeles Orphans' Home. I've heard of Joe DiMaggio, of course. They tell me he played with the Yankees in New York. I'm afraid he'll be some kind of apish brute wearing checkered pants and a pink tie, but actually he is quite a refined fellow. He looks like a bank executive in a dark suit, except for his strange head—his eyes set too far apart, his thick eyebrows, his extra-long nose, his gigantic mouth. I think that if he moved to Hollywood, he could play gangsters, but I don't tell him. We dine together several times in Los Angeles. I can see I'm disappointing him. He expected me to be a baseball fan, because of the magazine picture. I guess he finds something in me that helps him overcome his disappointment. With some prodding from the Fox public relations department, the journalists begin to write that the rising star and the baseball champ are considering marriage.

The Fox PR guys make up my past to suit their whims, and now my future. I don't even belong to myself. I'm a slave, that's a fact.

I, Marilyn

At last! They're offering me not one, but two leading roles! In color movies! First *Niagara*, a drama to be directed by Henry Hathaway (who made that great love story, *Peter Ibbetson*). Then *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, where I'll work with another HH: Howard Hawks, who directed *Monkey Business*.

For *Niagara*, I'll be on location for quite a while. Before I can do that, I have to spend a few days in the hospital. Not only do my periods still hurt every month, but I suffer from a kind of stomach ache now and then. A doctor thought it could be my appendix. Whenever it hears the word "appendix," the Studio says: "Remove it!" They're afraid a leading actor might get appendicitis during a shooting.

If I want to pose in the buff again some day, I'll have to spread a thick layer of make-up base on my belly to hide my scar. This isn't even my main worry. Dr. Rabwin, the surgeon, seems a nice man. I stick a piece of paper on my stomach for him to read:

Dr. Rabwin—most important to read before operation!

Dear Dr. Rabwin,

Cut as little as possible. I know it seems vain but that doesn't really enter into it. The fact that I am a woman is important and means much to me.

Save please (I can't ask you enough) what you can—I'm in your hands. You have children and you must know what it means—please Dr. Rabwin—I know somehow you will! Thank you—thank you—thank you.

For Gods sake Dear Doctor No ovaries removed—please again do whatever you can to prevent large scars.

Thanking you with all my heart.

Marilyn Monroe.

When I wake up, Dr. Rabwin introduces me to a colleague.

"Miss Monroe, this is Dr. Krohn. He is a gynecologist. I asked him to attend, hmm, when I read your note..."

Dr. Krohn is a smiling bald gentleman.

"You were right, miss Monroe. I had to restrain this fellow. He loves to cut up organs. Marcus, I told him, don't you touch miss Monroe's liver! Don't you go near her kidneys! He collects kidneys, you know, pickled in a jar. He says people don't need a gall-bladder. Calls it God's little mistake... So you can thank me that he only removed your appendix and nothing else!"

I, Marilyn

In *Niagara*, I play a woman who wants her lover to kill her husband. I graduate from dumb blonde to vicious blonde. I do have to roll my hips, though. I also get to sing a sexy song, but a censorship bureau inspector says most of it will have to be edited out.

They say Henry Hathaway treats actors harshly, but he is nice to me. He seems to consider I can act. He says the Studio never let me express my natural talent.

Before the shooting begins, I go to New York City. What do I do there? Gee, life is strange: I go to Yankee Stadium and attend some stupid baseball game with my new boyfriend, Joe DiMaggio. I like him, I really do, but I can't see this leading us anywhere. He splits his time between New York and San Francisco, his hometown, where he owns a restaurant. If we marry, how often will we see each other? He wants me to retire, like him, and become a housewife and mother. Well, I don't intend to move away from this place and give up my career just when my goal seems to come within reach. Are you kidding? But then, if I stay in Hollywood without him, I guess I'll see other men. I can't help it. I do feel so bad when I'm alone...

I don't say I'll never marry again. If I do, I'll be careful. One kind of man I'll try to avoid is the jealous kind. That's the rub with Joe DiMaggio. I mean, I noticed it right away: he's as jealous as an Italian guy can be, which means plenty. He's even jealous of Natasha. Send her away, he says. How could I do such a thing? I need her.

I tell a journalist that I never wear anything under my clothes.

"When I say nothing, I mean nothing, but nothing at all. No panties, no slips, no girdles, no bras. I like to feel unhampered."

Joe is mad at me. Italian mothers, or future mothers, don't go around without any underwear, or at least don't brag about it. What he can't stand is that millions of American men and women will imagine me naked under my dress. So what? Don't call it prurience, call it publicity.

He hates it when my partner kisses me in a film. He should go out with one of his female fans, not with a movie actress.

When I see him in New York City, we eat with his pals after the match in some Italian joint near Yankee Stadium. All they talk about is baseball. I'm bored to death and can hardly keep my eyes open. I would like to spend my evenings at the theater, but this is just something he doesn't ever do. What a guy!

I'm getting used to seeing my picture on the front page of the newspapers. There was that calendar business, followed by my first top billing in a movie, and then the Joe DiMaggio

I, Marilyn

idyll. When I look at my face in a mirror, I wonder: “Are you really a star, or are you just old me myself?” My fans send more than five thousand letters every week. Fox lets me use Marlene Dietrich’s former dressing room. The Studio folks who used to call me Marilyn now say “Miss Monroe.”

Everybody says I act better in comedies than in dramas. *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* is a comedy. I share top billing with Jane Russell. We play two gold diggers who try to catch rich husbands during an ocean crossing. My prey is Charles Coburn, who was my boss in *Monkey Business*. I play Lorelei Lee, my character, as a blonde who chooses to act dumb because that’s the way old gentlemen like it. I also sing and dance. Even Mr. Zanuck is impressed (or so they say) when he sees the scene where I sing *Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friends*. He can’t believe I’m such a good singer and asks whether I’ve been dubbed.

When the film’s premiere takes place at Grauman’s Chinese theater, in August 1953, they ask us, Jane and I, to print our hands and feet in the cement. Isn’t this great? I really feel I’ve made it. Even if my career collapses tomorrow, my mementoes will remain engraved forever near Gloria Swanson’s and Greta Garbo’s.

Jane’s impressive bust is quite famous. I suggest for fun that she should cast more than her hands and feet.

“Why don’t you leave your boobs to posterity?”

“I’ll do it if you leave them an impression of your number one asset.”

“What’s that?”

“Why, your ass, of course!”

Jane is a Los Angeles gal, like me. We even went to the same school, Emerson High. Although the journalists pretend we’re rivals, at each other’s throat, we become good friends. She sees that the camera makes me nervous and jokes to help me relax. I’m always afraid I’ll look ugly or seem stupid. I get up at 6 in the morning and come to the Studio on time, but then I spend hours getting made up and dressed. Gladys Rasmussen takes care of my hair. She begins with a perm, then she bleaches my hair with peroxide and tints it with a platinum-silver decoction. Whitey Snyder, my make-up man, lays a base, paints my eyes, applies my secret lipstick formula—adding a not-so-secret touch of Vaseline to keep my lips looking wet. Then my dresser helps me put on my dress. Often, she sews it right over my body so it fits tightly. At this precise moment, I notice something awful: I’m such a fool—I forgot to take my shower! I tend to be absent-minded, especially in the morning. This is because of the darn sleeping-pills. Shooting the film makes me so edgy that I can’t fall asleep at night,

I, Marilyn

although I feel exhausted. I know sleeping-pills are bad, but what can I do? I mean, if I don't sleep, I bet I'll have bags under my eyes and ugly red blotches on my skin. Okay, so I take my shower, then Gladys and Whitey and the dresser begin all over again. While I was supposed to play my scene at 10, it is already 2 PM. I'm so late that I panic. Mr. Hawks will be mad at me, I'm sure. When I come to the set, I try to read his mood. He pretends to joke, but his eyes do not laugh. I forget my lines. I can't speak anymore. Gee, I feel so stupid! I return to my dressing room and cry. I go to the toilet and throw up. Mr. Hawks sends Jane after me. She comforts me and consoles me. How would I cope without her?

If I wanted to be jealous of Jane, I would just have to think that she's getting 150,000 dollars, while my contract sets my salary to 15,000 dollars for three months of shooting. The title says *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Hey, I'm the blonde, after all! With the 1,250 dollars I receive every week, I must pay Natasha and my agents, send money for my mother's upkeep, buy food... Besides, I'm now taking theater lessons with Mr. Chekhov, a nephew of the famous Russian author, who studied in Moscow with Stanislavski. Natasha helps me prepare for my roles and rehearse them, but I would like to become a better actress, to enlarge my range beyond my present limits.

Mr. Chekhov has his own method for teaching theater acting. He invented strange exercises. I must stretch while imagining I'm extremely tall and heavy, then shrivel up and think I'm a midget.

"You must find your inner self," he says, "develop the harmony between your body and your mind, let your guts control your playing. When you know yourself better, you'll be able to decide whether a part is for you or not."

Since Johnny's death, I've been looking for a strong guide.

I play another comical dame in *How to Marry a Millionaire*, directed by Jean Negulesco. The story improves on my preceding film: three gold diggers! There are two other stars in the cast, Betty Grable and Lauren Bacall, but the press says: "Marilyn Monroe's new film."

Mr. Negulesco is born in Rumania. He's one of these refined European men. He is quite nice and polite to me.

"Lauren Bacall is a fast one," he says. "You're slower, but you work a lot. You know the saying: *qui va piano va sano*."

"Is this a Rumanian proverb, Mr. Negulesco?"

"Italian. In English, you say: haste makes waste."

I, Marilyn

Betty and Lauren protect me like fairy godmothers. Lauren says the Studio people only want to exploit the actors.

“You don’t have to obey them, Marilyn. You’re Fox’s number one cash cow. A star whom they pay 1,250 dollars a week! If you want to be late, be late. Let them wait. If you botch your lines twenty times, let them shoot the scene thirty times.”

“Yeah, but I don’t want to be late and botch my lines. It’s only that I can’t help it...”

There’s a scene where I must eat my breakfast in bed and answer the phone. Either I grab the phone before it rings, or I bring the cup to my lips without pouring the coffee first. I guess there’s something wrong with my brain. Even though I look at Natasha to get my cues, I can’t remember to pour the coffee and wait for the phone’s ring at the same time. Everybody becomes rather tense, but eventually we do shoot this scene, as well as all the others.

“You depend too much on your coach,” Mr. Negulesco says. “It makes you stiff. You’d act better without her.”

In this film, I play a shy woman who hides behind thick eyeglasses. When I first read the script, I refused to wear glasses. I was afraid I would look ugly.

“With the eyeglasses,” Mr. Negulesco said, “you’ll be able to demonstrate what a fine actress you are. Instead of exhibiting your sensuality like you’ve always done so far, you hide it. Then it blooms when you remove the glasses.”

The critics do compliment me on my acting. They find me very funny (and even sexier than usual) when I bump into furniture!

I talk to Lauren Bacall.

“Joe stays with me when he comes to Los Angeles, but then he goes away and I’m sad. If I married him, I’d go and live in San Francisco. I’d help him with his restaurant.”

“You want to spend your days cooking spaghetti instead of making movies?”

“I’m twenty-seven. I’d like to have children before I’m too old. I hate spaghetti, actually, but I didn’t tell Joe.”

Lauren is married to Humphrey Bogart. They have a sweet little boy, Steven. Sometimes he comes on the set to say hello to his mom. I love children. I sit on the floor next to him.

“How old are you, Stevie?”

“Four.”

“My! You’re so big for your age! I would have thought you were two or three.”

I hear the deep laugh of Lauren Bacall.

I, Marilyn

“I understand why you’re always late. I bet you find it tough to distinguish your left from your right. If he’s big for his age, you should think he’s six or seven, not two or three.”

“Yeah, I’m all mixed up sometimes.”

“You know what, Marilyn? You gobble too many pills.”

“I need them, otherwise I can’t sleep. Then I take some to wake up. Also vitamins, to look good.”

“At least, try not to drink any strong stuff at the same time.”

“There are so many dinners and parties... You know, often I drink a shot of whisky before the dinner or the party, I’m so tense. I’m meeting all these important people, journalists, politicians, who think I’m stupid just because I’m sexy. My nightmare is that I’ll kind of freeze and confirm their judgment.”

I’m a star, but I still panic. At the twelfth stroke of midnight, the magic spell will cease to operate and I’ll turn back into Norma Jean.

I still see Nana Karger now and then. She shows me an article in a newspaper.

“Look, Marilyn, it’s about you. It seems that Fox earned 25 million dollars with your three last movies.”

“Wow! It confirms what Lauren Bacall told me. But you know what? They still pay me like an employee and consider me an employee. They complain I cost a lot because of my being late, so to punish me they’re giving me a ghastly part in a western movie, *River of No Return*.”

“Can’t you refuse? Shouldn’t you be able to choose your own scripts?”

“I wish I could, but my contract doesn’t allow it. I play a singer, but she isn’t funny like Lorelei Lee. We’ll shoot in the Canadian Rockies.”

“Who’s Lorelei Lee?”

“The gal I play in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. When I recorded the musical numbers, I always thought of your son, who taught me how to sing.”

The Marilyn Monroe whom the public knows and likes, the Marilyn worth a million dollars, is a neat blonde, carefully made up, wearing a perfect hairdo and a tight dress. Setting this character on a raft rushing down a wild river doesn’t make sense. Besides, the director, Otto Preminger, is a perfect sadist. Compared to him, Fritz Lang was an angel. I lose my silly illusions about European men. Nasty brutes can grow up anywhere, obviously. As soon as the shooting begins, he gets into a scrape with Natasha.

“Just go to hell and stay there! I don’t want to see you on this set again.”

I, Marilyn

I call Mr. Zanuck.

“He told Natasha to go to hell. You know I can’t act without my coach. The only thing I can do without her, maybe, is cook spaghetti. It so happens I’ve received a job offer in that line.”

“Yeah, I’ve heard about it. Well, I’ll talk to him. Don’t worry.”

So Natasha comes back on the set. Mr. Preminger doesn’t seem too happy about it. Let him be unhappy.

Nobody shows me how to keep my balance on this devilish raft, so I fall into the river at least twice a day. Shelley Winters, who was my roommate long ago in the Studio Club, is shooting a film not far from here. She comes to visit.

“Be careful, Marilyn. You could break a leg.”

“Sometimes, I wish I would. I’d rest in a nice hospital bed instead of spending my days in cold water and hearing all this German shouting.”

I hope I won’t break a leg, but I do dream of the nice hospital bed. I tell everybody that I hurt my leg when I jumped from the raft. I go see a radiologist in Banff.

“There’s no fracture”, he says. “Maybe you sprained an ankle.”

“Can’t you put my leg into a cast, doctor? I’d feel safer.”

“A tight bandage should be enough. My assistant will bring some crutches for you.”

“Crutches? The press will love that.”

I know that the bored journalists who follow the shooting will blow up the news. “Marilyn Monroe hurt on location,” they write. Mr. Preminger understands I’m faking, but what can he do about it? He’d better change his behavior and become nice to me. He must interrupt the shooting. They’ve already lost weeks, actually, because the bloody raft refused to play its part smoothly.

Robert Mitchum, my partner in the film, finds the whole mess rather amusing.

“It ain’t *River of No Return*, but *Film of No Return*.”

Whatever happens, he never seems to care. When we have to wait for hours while the technicians repair the raft, he sits with his back to a tree and moves so little that I never know whether he’s awake or asleep. The camera certainly doesn’t frighten him. He looks like a huge placid bear.

“I know you, Marilyn,” he says. “I’ve seen you naked.”

“Lots of people have seen me naked.”

“Yeah, but that was during the war. I was pals with your husband, Jim Dougherty, in the Lockheed plant. He had photographed you on your house’s porch.”

I, Marilyn

“You’re right! I remember that picture!”

“You inserted messages in his lunch pail: ‘Daddy, I think about you. Your baby.’ I wonder what happened to good ol’ Jim.”

“He is a cop in Los Angeles. I met him once or twice. He says he’s still in love with me.”

“Are you going to marry Joe DiMaggio and work in a restaurant?”

“I don’t know.”

This shooting is really tough. We have to do some raft scenes more than ten times over. I’m just unable to rest and relax like Bob Mitchum. I’m wet, I’m cold, I’m tired. To avoid any more interruptions, the set’s doctor injects in my arm what he calls a “*hot shot*.” This is quite common. They give hot shots when they want to finish a scene on a certain day, although the actors have already worked sixteen or eighteen hours, or when dancers have done a big dance number in a musical twenty times and the director shouts: “Once more!” I mean, if he said: “We’ll finish it tomorrow morning,” they’d have to pay the whole crew for an extra day.

I ask the doctor what his hot shot contains.

“Oh, a mixture of amphetamines and vitamins.”

“Amphetamines? Isn’t that very strong?”

“Not stronger than a gallon or two of black coffee. I’ll also give you sleeping pills, otherwise you’ll stay awake until judgment come.”

Everybody pops pills in Hollywood. So far, I’ve taken only weak uppers and downers. To balance the amphetamines, the doctor gives me barbiturates, which are very strong sedatives. They treat actors like cattle.

Joe spends a few days with us. I think he’s jealous of Bob Mitchum and wants to keep an eye on me. He carries brand new fishing gear. He wears a checkered shirt, corduroy pants, rubber boots, so he looks like a fellow who goes fishing in a cartoon. I explore mountain streams with him. When we’re just the two of us and Mother Nature, far from those movie crazies, life seems much simpler.

By and by, Whitey Snyder, my makeup man, has become my confident. We have long talks every morning while he works on my face. He knows that I delay my arrival on the set because I’m scared. He thinks I don’t really fit in the movie world—meaning, the Hollywood movie world.

“You’d be happier if you married your Italian guy, Marilyn. Look at this wonderful landscape. You could buy a ranch and raise twelve children!”

I, Marilyn

“Maybe I’ll do it. Right now, I don’t find the river so wonderful, considering I keep falling into it.”

I, Marilyn

8 MISS MONROE'S HUSBAND

After *River of No Return*, the Studio wants me to play another sexy blonde in *Pink Tights*. My partner would be Frank Sinatra, and this is not what I'm complaining about. I just don't want to play any stupid part to please them. I ask to read the script. The Studio says no. Letting me read my part in advance seems the least they could do, considering I cost them 1,500 dollars a week and bring in millions. They don't respect me. Actors who aren't even stars can read their scripts and earn three times more than I do. They've always despised me, obviously. They knew me long ago as a clumsy beginner and they believe they can still treat me as one. I don't even need to read your lousy script. I know the part doesn't suit me. You can keep your *Pink Tights*! I'm not your slave. Jean Harlow resisted the Studio and got it to modify her contract. Bette Davis too: she told me when I worked with her on the set of *All About Eve*.

I decide not to attend the pre-production meetings. Fox says I broke my contract. Joe is delighted.

"What with all this Studio trouble and your not working, this would be a perfect time to marry. The Japanese have invited me to launch their baseball season: we could make it our honeymoon."

"Okay!"

Two days later, on January 14, 1954, I'm in Joe's restaurant in San Francisco. Reno, the restaurant's manager, calls a judge he knows.

"Could you come to City Hall in one hour for a wedding?" he asks him.

We reach City Hall just as the judge is climbing up the steps. Our two witnesses are Reno and Lefty O'Doul, a baseball old-timer who let Joe play in his team before the war. The City Hall people were not expecting us, so they can't find a typewriter to type our contract. While they're looking for a typewriter in the basement or the attic or somewhere, I find a public phone and call my favorite journalists.

"This is Marilyn. Want to know something? I'm getting married! Of course, to Joe. Who else?"

I, Marilyn

When I married Jim Dougherty, I was Norma Jeane Baker. Now, go figure, it seems I'm Norma Jeane Mortensen. Who cares? I'm Marilyn Monroe anyway. I carry a small bunch of orchids. I kiss my new husband.

"I want you to promise something, Joe. If I die first, you'll lay flowers on my grave every week, like William Powell did on Jean Harlow's grave."

"Sure. I promise, Marilyn."

He offers me a gold ring with tiny diamonds set all around it. I give him some pictures of me that weren't printed in the famous calendar because they revealed too much.

I guess the journalists have called their pals in radio stations, who spread the news right away. A crowd is waiting for us outside City Hall. They applaud when they see us. The photographers order us to kiss again, of course.

"How many children will you have, Marilyn?" the journalists ask.

"I'd like to have six!"

Before leaving for Japan, we spend two weeks in my lawyer's mountain lodge near Palm Springs. A good thing is that there is no TV. As Joe can't watch baseball or football games, he has to take care of me. He teaches me how to play billiards.

I'm glad to fly far away. I've gone to Mexico and Canada, but I have never crossed the ocean. Joe knows Japan already.

"The Japanese are crazy about baseball. In polls, their favorite American guys are General MacArthur and me."

We embark on a Pan American Airways plane in San Francisco. I'm always slightly nervous when I fly. I usually travel with a gang of Studio people who joke and help me forget my fear. Joe doesn't joke much. Clutching the arms of my first-class seat, I wonder whether I haven't made a terrible mistake. He has the perfect body of a Greek athlete, okay, but I'm sitting next to him and I'm bored. What can we talk about? His favorite subjects are baseball and boxing and maybe golf. If Whitey Snyder or some other Hollywood friend had come with us, we could exchange gossip and I would be laughing instead of brooding. I hoped to improve my life. My usual ill-luck is catching up with me. What a mess! Do I really want to turn into an Italian mama? I love his body, but do I love him? Maybe I thought I loved him because I saw him so unhappy. His brother drowned. When he wept in my arms, my heart melted... I can't stand to see somebody cry. But nobody consoles me when I cry.

When we stop over in Honolulu, battalions of people invade the tarmac as soon as the plane ceases to move. I've never seen such a wild mob. Didn't expect it at all. In Los Angeles, the public doesn't know where I go. Or maybe the Studio organizes some kind of

I, Marilyn

event and then the police protects me with fences. Now, of course, the Studio isn't involved with my life anymore. We must get off the plane, which has to be refueled and checked and won't be able to fly for another four or five hours. My fans shout and scream, they rush at me, they want to touch me. Joe tries to keep them away. They pull my hair. Awful! This reminds me of riots I've seen in newsreels. My heart is pounding like hell. I'm beginning to feel really scared.

Could things get worse than this? You bet. In Tokyo, the crowd is much bigger. Policemen keep it at bay, but they advise us to exit through the plane's baggage hatch. Better avoid a stampede, they say. We climb into an open convertible car. Millions of people line the road going into town. "Mon-chan! Mon-chan!" they shout. According to our hosts, this is an affectionate way of saying "Miss Monroe." I can feel that Joe is somewhat upset. When we left San Francisco, he was still the most famous baseball player in the world. Now, he discovers that he's become "Mon-chan's husband."

The human sea that seethes and churns in front of the Imperial Hotel, behind a phalanx of cops, doesn't quieten until I show myself at my bedroom's window to acknowledge the Japanese people's welcome. I feel like Stalin on the Kremlin's balcony. I turn toward Natasha to ask her what to say, but she isn't there.

I figured I'd travel as Mrs. DiMaggio, a baseball player's bride who takes it easy on her honeymoon. What if she wears blue jeans and lets her hair down? Gee, I was such a fool! I never see ahead. The people were expecting the famous Marilyn Monroe, of course. I have to play my character, which is much harder than usual because the persons who spend hours every morning creating me remained in California. I must make up my face myself, find the best hairdresser around and ask a chambermaid to hand sew one of my glamorous dresses on my body. I thought I was taking some vacations. Well, I have to work everyday like in Hollywood.

I'm beginning to realize that something terrible has happened: I am locked inside Marilyn Monroe. I can't escape my character. Wherever I go, I'm on a movie set.

Some American embassy officials ask me whether I would accept to go to Korea and sing for our troops. Yeah, sure. At least, when I'm away, Joe will be able to visit baseball clubs without being bothered by my fans. I might as well play my part, considering I can't avoid it. Instead of being grateful, Joe sulks because I leave him alone during our honeymoon.

"What's more, it's pretty dangerous."

"But it's the least anyone can do."

I, Marilyn

The troops are more disciplined than the airport crowds, but as enthusiastic. For the first time in my life, I perform in front of a live public. When ten thousand soldiers yell “Marilyn” together, I bet the birds in the sky are scared to death. These poor GI’s are risking their lives far from home, far from their girlfriends. My songs bring happiness to them and to me. Ever since I was a small kid, I’ve had a vague feeling that “nobody loves me.” In Korea I discover the opposite feeling: “Everybody loves me.”

I often sing outside, whatever the weather. As a result, I catch a nasty cold. When I fly back to Tokyo, I’m burning with fever, but as happy as can be.

“It was amazing, Joe! You’ve never heard such wild applause...”

“Oh yes, I have. Be careful: don’t let yourself be carried away. You miss a ball once and you find that the boos can be noisier than the cheers.”

We go back to San Francisco. There I learn my new profession: restaurant mascot. Tourists come to Joe’s joint on Fisherman’s Wharf just to see me and beg for autographs. The restaurant is always full. So I was bored in the airplane, in Japan and Korea I was excited and enthralled and whatever, I mean the contrary of bored, now I’m back to bored. Back to bored housewife. When I was Mrs. Jim Dougherty, I could at least iron Jim’s shirt to pass the time away. Now this fat Mexican dame irons the shirts. Gosh, I’ve taken the wrong path, that’s for sure. Won’t spend the rest of my life here.

Actually, I can’t get Arthur Miller out of my mind. I’ve just married Joe, but I dream secretly of marrying Arthur. Isn’t that strange?

Joe’s brother is a commercial fisherman, as were his other brother (who drowned) and his father. We spend a day at sea on his trawler. Joe is red with pleasure. I’m green.

When I walk in the streets of San Francisco, I must hide under a black wig and behind sunglasses or risk being mobbed. Well, if I’m a star, I’d rather live as one. I’d be a fool to give up that bliss I felt, oh that thrill, when the love of ten thousand soldiers rushed at me like a hot tidal wave.

And what do you know? Fox decides to make amends, all of a sudden. Yeah, *Pink Tights* was a ridiculous script, they say. Let’s forget about it. Why don’t you come back, Marilyn? We’ll double your salary. We have a script made to measure for you: *The Seven Year Itch*.

I have to admit the project is quite attractive. A witty comedy, directed by a great master, Billy Wilder. Okay, then!

I, Marilyn

As the script isn't ready yet, they give me a supporting role in a worthless musical, *There's No Business Like Show Business*. I'm beginning to regret *Pink Tights*. At least I would have worked with Frank Sinatra. I play a hat-check girl who becomes a music-hall artist. My main dance number, which should be provocative and sexy, is just vulgar and ugly. I'm wondering whether I shouldn't blame Natasha Lytess. When I follow her advice, I tend to exaggerate my postures and gestures.

Gosh, I find it difficult to sing and dance after a gap of one year. Common wisdom says that when you stop working every day, you slip back. I can't even learn my lines. Nana Karger, whom I stay with when I need solace, tells me I should avoid alcohol and sleeping pills if I want to keep my memory and my voice.

I quarrel with Joe, too. We live in a big house in Beverly Hills. He refuses to see my Hollywood friends. He spends his life watching stupid baseball games and variety shows on TV. I feel even lonelier than usual, since I can't meet my friends. Often, he doesn't speak to me for days. I don't even know why.

"What's wrong, Joe?" I ask him in a shy whisper.

"Stop nagging me!" he answers in a threatening voice.

He forbids me to wear low-cut dresses, as if he was my master. He says the only roles I play in the movies are whores. He despises women, actually. He's violent. He beats me. How could I stop taking sleeping pills? If I try, I keep pondering the failure of my marriage and I can't sleep. I'm afraid I'll become crazy.

When *There's No Business Like Show Business* is released, the journalists write crushing reviews and my fans are disappointed.

One thing scatters the cloud that darkens my mood: I begin shooting *The Seven Year Itch*. Mr. Wilder is a real genius! He grew up in Vienna, like Otto Preminger, but his German accent evokes waltzes and pastries. I admire his well-cut clothes and his well-rounded sense of humor. He sports a small comical hat that nobody else could wear without being ridiculous. He is the second director, after Howard Hawks, who understands how to draw out and enhance my personality. He gives me time to find my own way of doing things. Instead of expelling Natasha from the set, he considers her his ally, talking to her when I don't agree with the way he asks me to play.

I play the naïve but charming neighbor of Tom Ewell. He is a married man, left alone in his New York apartment while his wife is gone away to escape the summer heat. We shoot in a real house on 61st street. When we work in a Hollywood sound stage, the public doesn't attend the shooting. In New York, how could you keep the bystanders away from the streets?

I, Marilyn

Hundreds of them come to see me everyday. Even though barriers maintain them at a distance, we hear their shouts (“Marilyn! Marilyn!”), so that we’ll have to record the dialogue later, back in Hollywood.

During my tour in Korea, I overcame my fear of crowds. I feel that all the men looking at me are in love with me. Gee, I won’t complain about that. See them push and shove and jostle on September 15 at 2 AM, at the corner of 52nd street and Lexington avenue! Why the ungodly hour? So we can close the street to traffic. We’re shooting the sexiest scene in the film... As the story takes place during a sizzling New York summer, I look for a cool breeze by standing above a subway ventilation grating. An impish draft slides under my white skirt, which billows like a parachute.

Actually, we don’t shoot the scene for real. The Studio hopes this publicity stunt will bring in some advance buzz. All the papers publish the subway grating picture! Meanwhile, carpenters in Hollywood are building a set so we can shoot the real thing far from the crazy crowd.

Joe doesn’t usually attend my shootings, but a cruel journalist brings him to the corner of 52nd and Lexington so he can record his reaction. His wife is showing her thighs to two thousand excited men who whistle and hiss and shout: “Hurrah! Hurrah! Higher!” Joe is raving mad. He ends the night in a bar with his baseball and billiards cronies. They’re full of beer, of course. They laugh at him, they scoff and jeer. We quarrel in our hotel room. He shouts, he hits me, I cry. On the very same day, he flies to San Francisco. I tell the journalists that we are going to divorce, eight months after our wedding.

Now that I don’t fight every evening with Joe, I come to the set on time and cease to forget my lines.

“You need your freedom,” says Natasha (she never liked Joe).

Puritans rave just like Joe when I show my thighs. According to their radio stations, I encourage sexual perversion and I shame America. Family groups write angry letters to the Studio and the newspapers. I would like to be respected, but I am not a respectable woman.

It is said that fifty million men dream of cheating on their wives with me.

I’m getting to know quite a few people in New York City. I see Milton Greene often. He is considered one of the top photographers right now. I met him last year in Hollywood. He came to shoot a session with me for Look magazine. He made pictures that I really loved and admired. I had heard about him, but I was quite surprised when I met him: he seemed so young, just like a high school graduate.

I, Marilyn

“Why, you’re nothing but a boy!”

“Well, you’re nothing but a girl!”

We laughed and became friends. In New York, we talk a lot.

“You can’t go on with your contract, Marilyn. There is no other company where such huge profits, I mean millions, depend on one simple employee with no power at all.”

“Nobody will work with me if I break my contract. I’ll become an outcast.”

“I’ll work with you. I’ve wanted to switch from photo to movies for a long time. Why don’t we create a production company together? We could produce your films, then sell them to Fox or another studio.”

As soon as I’m back in Los Angeles, Joe flies in from San Francisco.

“I still love you, Marilyn.”

“So you hit me and you hurt me and some day you’ll kill me, but I should accept it because you love me. You’re a slugger, Joe, but I’m not a ball. I can’t live with you anymore. I’m scared.”

I flee to my usual refuge, Nana Karger’s place. I don’t study singing with her son anymore, but with Hal Schaefer, who’s been my voice coach and accompanist ever since *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. I’ve never met such a sweet man. He listens to me, understands me, boosts my self-confidence. He teaches me a technique of deep breathing and relaxation that helps me sing better. We record some songs together for RCA. For the first time, the public will appreciate me without looking at my boobs and ass.

As I feel rather low because of my marriage’s failure, Hal consoles me. I find it quite comforting to discover that all men are not as beastly as Joe.

I certainly remember how jealous Joe could be. This was long ago. He isn’t supposed to be jealous now, as our marriage is over. Legally, of course, we are not divorced yet. A mere legal formality. Our lawyers are working on it. I don’t live with Joe, that’s the main thing.

Male psychology doesn’t obey clear laws. He’s still jealous. He sends private dicks to follow me. The divorce decree is published on October 27, 1954. Nine days later, on November 5, while I’m spending the evening with Hal in an apartment belonging to some friends, Joe and his pal Frank Sinatra, whom the detectives called I guess, come with baseball bats to break our door. I bet they’re drunk, too. Otherwise, they wouldn’t break the wrong door and enter our neighbor’s place! She’s a nice old lady with a strong voice. She hollers as if she was acting in a horror flick and discovering a headless corpse. We hear hurried steps,

I, Marilyn

then the roar of a car engine. Hal is shaking like a leaf. A burly Italian fellow, he must have been a friend of Joe, already knocked him down in a parking garage last week.

The next evening, on November 6, the Studio celebrates the end of the shooting of *The Seven Year Itch* by giving a big party in my honor at Romanoff's restaurant. Everybody who's anybody in Hollywood is there: the big bosses, Sam Goldwyn, Jack Warner and Darryl Zanuck; my idols, Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable; Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, Gary Cooper, Jimmy Stewart, Doris Day, and dozens of other stars. I find it rather surprising that in real life these giants of the screen are just ordinary people, some of them quite short. This must also be true of me, I'm afraid. She's gorgeous on the screen, Gary says to Jimmy, but not much in the flesh!

Ronald Reagan comes to me with a wide grin on his face.

"Hey, Marilyn, remember me? I launched your career!" The crowd around me is waiting for the punch line. "I published her picture on the cover of Yank magazine during the war!"

His first wife, Jane Wyman, is there too, as well as my former lover Fred Karger. They married last month, someone told me.

Hollywood is beginning to admit, mainly because they can't play deaf when the public is speaking, that I shine in the firmament with the other stars. I'm quite flurried, though. To begin with, I'm one hour late. It isn't my fault: my car ran out of gas! Besides, I didn't know all these celebrities would be waiting for me.

9 NEW YORK CITY

They want me to shoot another stupid film, *How To Be Very, Very Popular*. They want me to play a strip-teaser! So what? Do you think you can take me for a ride until the next century?

Milton Greene's lawyers have found legal loopholes that let me break my contract with Fox. If the Studio goes to Court, it will cost us at least 50,000 dollars in lawyers' fees, but Fox will lose millions—I mean, what they'd gain with my next movies. So we're quite confident they'll prefer to sign a contract with the Marilyn Monroe Productions company, which we intend to found as soon as possible.

At the end of 1954, I put my black wig and sunglasses on, I buy a plane ticket in the name of Zelda Zonk and I fly discreetly to New York with Milton. His wife, Amy, is waiting for us at the airport. I move to their house with my books, my records, my professional hair dryer, my pictures of Clark Cable and president Lincoln. They live in the countryside, in Connecticut. Their house is a refurbished barn surrounded by acres of meadows and woods. Gee, they have their own river and lake! I discover ice, snow, seasons. I can take strolls by myself. I'm beginning a new life, really.

I love Josh, Milton and Amy's son, who is learning to walk and talk. I tell him I'm aunt Marilyn. I babysit when his parents spend an evening in town. I sing lullabies to put him to sleep.

Seen from the East coast, the Hollywood crowd seems terribly vulgar. Milton and Amy are well-dressed, worldly and refined. I watch Amy: her way of speaking without ever raising her voice, her knack for combining the fabrics and colors of her clothes. She looks like Audrey Hepburn. I've got a lot to learn if I want to play in better movies. Amy says I don't need to show off my body by wearing tight and clinging dresses. She introduces me to fashion designers who renew my wardrobe. We spend the new company's money. After discussions with bankers that I attend but don't try to understand, Milton decides to take a mortgage on the barn and finance the company himself. He says I must maintain my star's standing. He rents an apartment in the luxury Waldorf Towers building so I can stay in New York and show myself in public now and then. He buys a white Ford Thunderbird for me. He pays the

I, Marilyn

hairdresser, the makeup man, the masseur, the doctor, and so on. He finds a press agent, Lois Weber, who'll take care of my relations with the newspapers.

He spends 400 dollars per month so that Gladys, my mother, can live in a private psychiatric home rather than in the State hospital. He intends to spend about 50,000 dollars per year, on top of the money for the lawyers.

To turn into a skilled actress and be able to play the toughest parts, I follow the courses of Lee Strasberg. My friend Shelley Winters, one of his pupils, brought me to his class. He's the guy who taught Marlon Brando, James Dean, Paul Newman, Montgomery Clift. The school is called The Actors Studio. Before he became its artistic director (it was founded by Elia Kazan and others), Lee Strasberg was an actor and director in a company called The Group Theater. The Carnovskys, whom I studied with at the beginning of my career, worked with him there. He is a small gray-haired fifty-five-year old man who throws sharp glances through thick glasses. He reminds me of a taxi driver I know, except for his very peculiar voice—quite soft and utterly convincing. He doesn't have to shout to exert his authority, because his students, the so-called "members" of the Studio, respect and fear him.

"You're as talented as Marlon Brando," he says. "You're naturally luminous. There is a powerful source of energy hidden deep inside you. You must learn to tap it and control it to feed your acting, otherwise it will spoil and make you ill. How will you tap this tremendous energy? By finding your inner key and your emotional memory."

He talks a lot about this "inner key" and "emotional memory." An actor who finds his inner key is able to enter a part fully, body and soul, so that he seems to live the character instead of only playing a role. The actor builds up the character's emotions by drawing from the "secret treasure" of his own emotional memory.

The courses take place on Tuesday and Friday at noon. The students play short scenes, ten minutes each, but I feel too shy to play in front of the others. Besides, I always miss the beginning, because I'm so goddam late. Lee gives me private lessons outside the class. He's not as tough with me as with Susan, his daughter. She says he can become enraged and foam at the mouth like a dog, but he's always nice to me. He asks me to sing a song, first without moving at all, then jumping up and down a low stool. For another exercise, I must close my eyes and evoke a childhood memory. I remember the day when I tried to escape from the orphanage with another girl. The housemother caught us, but the directress, instead of punishing me, let me apply her make up and perfume.

I, Marilyn

After a while, I meet the Studio's most famous pupil, who happens to be my favorite actor: Marlon Brando. We go out together a few times. Although he plays violent characters, he is really a sweet guy.

Often, the Studio students go to a psychoanalyst who helps them find their inner key and their emotional memory. I want to try that. Milton Greene recommends his analyst, Mrs. Hohenberg. She's a plump white-haired Hungarian lady, who speaks with the same accent as my friend André de Dienes, the photographer.

When *The Seven Year Itch* is released, the movie critics find my character so fascinating that they tend to forget Tom Ewell, my partner. Well, I wish they'd talk a little less of my sex appeal and a little more of my acting. This is difficult, I guess, when a sixty-foot picture of me standing on the grating is displayed on Times Square. Under the billowing skirt, people can admire the biggest white panties ever painted by poster artists.

Billy Wilder, whom I meet at the film's premiere, says I'm losing my time at the Actors Studio.

"You don't need to learn how to act, Marilyn. Just be yourself in front of the camera. If you really want to study something, you should go to Switzerland and study punctuality at Patek Philippe's."

"Who's Patek Philippe?"

He shows me the name on his watch. What a joker!

I love to walk in New York City. I wear sunglasses, but I don't need my black wig. Without my platinum hairdo, my makeup and my tight Marilyn dress, I'm just another woman and nobody recognizes me.

What am I saying? Six people recognize me whatever my disguise. They are fans of mine, four teenage girls and two boys, who take turns waiting at my door or across the street. I hadn't even noticed them until they were featured in several magazines. At first, they kept at a distance from each other, then they joined forces. The magazines call them "The Monroe Six." I exchange a few words with them and let them run small errands for me.

"Hi, you Six! How are you today?"

"Hi, Miss Monroe!"

"I've got a prescription here. Would anybody go to the drugstore?"

I, Marilyn

Actually, just as the Three Musketeers were four fellows, there are seven Six. Last year, when I was shooting *The Seven Year Itch*, I couldn't help hear, in the crowd of gawkers who stood behind barricades, a fifteen-year old kid who shouted:

"I want a kiss! I want a kiss!"

"And what else?"

"Come on, Marilyn! Just a tiny peck on my cheek!"

When I came back to New York City, I saw him with the Six sometimes. He doesn't want to join them. They tell me his name is Jimmy Haspiel. He has a pleasant round face. He could play a newspaper delivery boy in the movies.

The sleeping tablets seem to be losing their power over me. Ten thousand thoughts jostle and fight inside my mind. Where am I headed? Will the Marilyn Monroe production company make films, or will it negotiate so that Fox makes them? Is my career as a star over? Will the Actors Studio courses help me turn into a real actress? During the sessions with Mrs. Hohenberg, the nightmares of my childhood emerge as from some deep recess. They all left me behind... Gladys became crazy. The Atkinsons went to England, the Giffens to Mississippi. Grace gave me to the orphanage instead of taking care of me, then went to Virginia with Doc... When I can't find sleep at all, I go out in the middle of the night. I'm glad one of the Six is always there to escort me. I guess the pills and drinks boost my anxiety. Solitude scares me. I telephone to Nana or Joe at 3 AM. Or I ring Lee and Paula Strasberg's door. I sit with Paula in the kitchen. Wrapped in an old shabby night robe, she looks like a benevolent Russian grandmother, a babushka. She drinks tea, I sip champagne. I seldom sleep the night through. Is it surprising, then, that I look like a sleepwalker during the day?

I wonder whether I have any sincere friends. To the Hollywood honchos, I'm the hen that lays golden eggs, a blond profit gusher. Even Milton and Amy Greene have invested their own capital and hope to earn money through me. They are negotiating with Fox in my name without consulting me. For the public, I am a star, an out-of-reach goddess. But I don't feel divine at all. My periods still hurt like hell every month. Dr. Krohn, who's been my gynecologist for a long time (I met him when this surgeon, I don't remember his name, removed my appendix), says my reproductive organs are in bad shape and maybe I'll never have children. I feel lousy all the time. I swallow all kinds of pills that make no difference.

No wonder I enjoy the company of the Monroe Six. If they consider me a goddess, it is a goddess who walks the earth in blue jeans and sneakers. I can talk to them without being afraid of saying something foolish, without worrying about my career and my inner key.

I, Marilyn

Actually, I do acquire two sincere friends: the poet Norman Rosten and his wife Hedda. In the spring of 1955, I'm being photographed when a downpour interrupts the session. The photographer knows some people nearby.

"This guy is a poet, Marilyn. You told me you enjoy poetry, so you should like him."

So I dry my hair at Norman and Hedda's place and become chums right away with their daughter, Patricia, who's eight years old. She shows me a series of poems Norman wrote for her. They move me to tears.

"Are you a model?" Hedda asks me.

"No, I'm an actress."

"Do you play in the theater? In what play?"

"I play in the movies."

"Is that right? What's your name?"

"Marilyn Monroe."

It makes no difference to them. They like me, that's all. I often visit them. Norman reads poems aloud. He helps me discover Walt Whitman and W. B. Yeats. I try to write poems, too, but I find it very tough.

I go to a concert with Norman. He stops to buy some gas. I wear my glasses and a scarf.

"I just bet ten dollars with my pal that your passenger is Marilyn Monroe," the gas station guy tells Norman.

"She isn't, but she is used to being mistaken for her."

As we're getting ready to drive away, I see the man is giving ten dollars to his pal. I feel bad, as if I had fooled the poor fellow. I take off my scarf and glasses.

"Give him his ten dollars back. I am really Marilyn Monroe!"

Norman Rosten introduces me to one of his high school friends: Arthur Miller. Gee, we've already met!

We're both free. He still lives in the same house as his wife, but they don't share a bedroom anymore. He is waiting for his kids to grow up and then he'll divorce. He often spends the evening, and sometimes the night, in my Waldorf Towers apartment. I'm sure we'll marry eventually and I'll be happy at last. He is very clever, but also quite warm and human. As he has to make up characters with their psychology and thoughts for his theater plays, he understands my frailty and my worries like nobody ever did before.

"When they were sending you right and left as a child, it was a way of saying they considered you worthless. That's why you lack self-esteem. Subconsciously, you hate

I, Marilyn

yourself and want to destroy yourself. You believe that all these people are trying to exploit you, but at the same time you'll do anything to please them, hoping they'll recognize your worth."

I talk about all this with Mrs. Hohenberg. I feel as if two people shared my body: a star who's beginning to know what she wants, and a poor frightened child. Often, I feel the star is somebody else and I speak about her in the third person. I look at a set photograph and I say: "This part was really tailor-made for Marilyn..." Sometimes, I just don't know who I am anymore. I don't recognize Marilyn. I mean, she mutates all the time. Milton Greene's Marilyn is neither Arthur Miller's nor Joe DiMaggio's. I change like a chameleon to become the Marilyn whom this or that person is expecting to see.

I stroll along Fifth Avenue and nobody notices me, but suddenly I feel like becoming Marilyn, or I just can't help turning into the great star Marilyn. I don't really know how I do it... There's something different in the way I move my hips and my legs. I put my breast forward, I raise my head, I smile... It works like magic: all the people stare at me.

In December 1955, one year after I left Hollywood, we obtain what Milton Greene hoped for: Fox negotiates another seven-year contract with Marilyn Monroe Productions. They don't have much choice, considering *The Seven Year Itch* brought five million dollars into their bank account. Every new million feels like a dagger through the heart of the Fox shareholders. "Jesus, why did you let her go?" they ask.

According to the new contract, I must play in four movies at least. I can choose the director and the cameraman and refuse the script if I don't like it. My company will receive 100,000 dollars per film, plus a percentage of the profits if any. Besides, I'm allowed to shoot movies for other studios.

The first film for Fox will be based on a theater play I saw in New York City, *Bus Stop*. I would like John Huston to direct it, but he is not available, so I suggest Joshua Logan, the only American who ever worked in Moscow with Stanislavsky. Afterwards, Marilyn Monroe Productions will enter a partnership with some English companies and Warner Bros to shoot *The Prince and The Showgirl* in England—with Laurence Olivier, the greatest actor in the English theater.

Laurence Olivier and his wife, Vivien Leigh (who played Scarlett in *Gone With The Wind*) come from London especially to hold a press conference at my side. Half-way through the conference, a shoulder strap suddenly snaps, so that my low-cut dress is promoted to extra-low. The photographers love it. All the newspapers publish my picture. Is this good publicity

I, Marilyn

for our future film or what? Sourpusses say this is a prank and I sabotaged the strap myself before the conference. The sourpusses are right: the strap button was held by a single thin thread and I even rehearsed the scene with my dresser. If I wasn't able to make up this kind of script, I wouldn't be the most famous star in the world.

I, Marilyn

10 MARILYN MILLER

I fly back to Hollywood to shoot *Bus Stop*. While Lee Strasberg must stay in New York to take care of the Actors Studio, his wife, Paula, comes with me.

I don't need Natasha Lytess anymore, since I have Paula Strasberg. Even when I stopped working for Fox, they kept Natasha as head coach. Now Paula is going to become a Fox employee to help me on the set, so they send Natasha away. That's the way it is. What can I do about it? I haven't seen her for one year. I don't feel like seeing her. When she phones, my secretary says I'm away. She's angry. She says that I owe her everything, that she created me, that she wasted her life to help me succeed, that I wouldn't have become Marilyn Monroe without her. This is crazy. I ask my lawyer to threaten her with a lawsuit if she goes on harassing me. She can't complain. She earned lots of money because of me. She even bought a house in Beverly Hills.

Joshua Logan, the director, at first refuses to let Paula near the set. Milton Greene convinces him to relent. Whereas Natasha prevented me from being my natural self, Paula helps me find my character deep inside me. I know I have a lousy reputation because of my coach, my lateness, my whims and my pills, but I'm the star after all. The film gets made eventually, one way or another.

Milton and Amy Green followed me to Hollywood. We live together in a large house in Westwood, close to the Fox Studio. Not only is Milton my business partner, but he lights the sets.

Bus Stop takes place in a small Arizona town. I play Cherie, a second-rate barroom singer whom an innocent young cowboy falls in love with. Joshua Logan understands he should not rush me. He is wonderfully patient with me. He discovers—hey, what a surprise—that I'm not just a sexy blonde but that I can also act and think.

"This gorgeous costume won't do, I tell him. I mean, the girl isn't a showgirl in Las Vegas. She sings in a lousy cowboy joint. Look, I have brought one I found in the Fox wardrobe department. Shabby, you know."

"Yeah, I guess you're right."

I, Marilyn

“Wait, I’ll tear the fishnet stockings. The girl thinks nobody’s going to notice the hole, the bar is so dark... She sleeps in the daytime, you know. She never sees daylight, so I thought of a very white makeup, kind of ghostlike. My accent okay?”

“Sure. Everybody will believe you’re a born Dixie girl. I should have told you sooner how good it sounds. You can drop it now.”

“Oh, but Mr. Logan, I don’t want to drop it. I try to speak like this day and night, so I can really become Cherie.”

This is the Actors Studio’s method. Gosh, I really think Lee Strasberg helped me become a better actress. Lee himself told me that Marlon Brando and I were his most talented students. Joshua Logan says I’m one of the greatest actresses of the day, but that Hollywood wasted me and never gave me a chance. He changed his mind about me, actually. He was rather skeptical when my agent, Lew Wasserman, asked him whether he would accept to direct *Bus Stop*. “But Marilyn can’t act!” he said.

When *Bus Stop* is released, the movie critics also change their minds. “Hold onto your chairs, everybody,” the New York Times guy writes. “Get set for a rattling surprise. Marilyn Monroe has finally proved herself an actress in *Bus Stop*.” And another one: “Marilyn effectively dispels once and for all the notion that she is merely a glamour personality.” I’d like to enlarge and frame these quotations, then hang them on the walls of my apartment.

May, 1956. I’m in a New York City apartment (rented for me by Milton Greene), waiting for Arthur Miller, who’s getting a quick divorce in Reno, Nevada. As soon as he comes back, we’ll marry.

I’ve adopted a cat, Mitsou. She’s pregnant. Oh my God, she’s going to have her babies! I find a vet in the phone book.

“Hello, Doctor Webster? I’ve got a Persian cat who’s going into labor. Could you come and help? I live real close to your place.”

“Okay. I’m coming. What’s your name and address?”

“Marilyn Monroe, 2 Sutton Place.”

“This is not funny, miss. I’m a busy man.”

He hangs up. I try two more vets, with the same results. Being Marilyn Monroe is tough. Several kittens are born already. I call Lois Weber, my New York press agent.

“Don’t worry, Marilyn. I’ll be over soon. Also, I’ll call a vet without giving your name. I’ll meet him in the lobby and come up with him.”

I, Marilyn

Eight kittens are born altogether. The vet says Mitsou won't have enough milk, so we should give them goat's milk.

As Arthur is Jewish, I decide to become Jewish too. I'm not sure I believe in God as much as I did when I went to church with aunt Ana, but I know one thing: all religions are alike. You just have to love God, what else? Rabbi Goldberg agrees with me anyway. He teaches me the main rules of Judaism a few days before the religious wedding ceremony. Some cynical people laugh at me because I only spent two hours with the rabbi. Actually, I already know the main holidays and customs. I mean, I celebrated Pesach and Yom Kippur with Joe Schenk, Fred Karger, Johnny Hyde, Milton Greene, Norman Rosten and many others. I've heard Billy Wilder and Lee Strasberg, and even Mr. Zanuck, tell Jewish jokes. Now I'll be able to understand them!

After the rabbi, my next teacher is Arthur's mother, Augusta. She shows me how to prepare *gefilte fish* (a kind of stuffed carp), borscht (beet soup) and other Jewish specialties. She and Isadore, her husband, live in a small house they share with another family in Brooklyn. They are very simple people.

As rumors keep mentioning my relationship with Arthur, journalists are beginning to lurk near his Connecticut country home, where we live together. We decide to play our cards face up and tell them about our marriage plans. Arthur asks Lois Weber to call a small press conference.

"I figured we could do it here, in my country house. Of course, as we're outside New York City, I don't know whether they'll come. I guess four or five of them will."

"Four or five? I think you don't understand who's the gal you're marrying. There will be so many of them that they'll be hanging from the trees."

Lois is right, of course. Several hundred journalists invade Arthur's property. They just stay there for days on end, trampling the lawn, hoping they'll be able to follow us and attend the wedding. When we go to town for errands, a whole battalion chases after us. This is ridiculous. On June 29, Arthur's cousin, who is driving our car, accelerates to shake them off. We hear a loud noise: a car went straight ahead in a curve and crashed into a tree. I must not lose my composure and scream, otherwise they'll publish terrible photographs of me everywhere. I feel as scared and panicky as when fans pulled my hair in the Honolulu airport—as if the Marilyn Monroe character escaped my control and attracted grief.

Arthur's cousin stops the car and pulls over.

"Stay in the car. I'll go and see," Arthur says.

I, Marilyn

A woman who works as New York correspondent for the French magazine Paris-Match is lying in a pool of blood. She went through the windshield. Shards have slit her throat open. The air is so hot, all of a sudden. I'm sweating and very cold at the same time.

We decide to marry at once, I mean we must end this craziness. Just as the manager of Joe's restaurant has done last time, Arthur phones a judge he knows in White Plains. To escape the journalists, who cooled down anyway after the accident (an ambulance carried the woman to the hospital, but we all know she was dead already), we let them take a few pictures in front of the house. I try hard to smile my Marilyn smile. I kiss Arthur, and so on. Okay, they don't try to chase after us when we leave. The judge weds us at 7 PM, in four minutes. I wear a plain skirt and a sweater. Arthur doesn't even wear a tie. Arthur's cousin and his wife are our witnesses.

Two days later, we celebrate the Jewish wedding. This time, we invite twenty-five guests or so: the Strasbergs, the Greenes, the Rostens and my other New York friends. I wear a wedding-dress and a veil, Arthur a penguin's tailcoat. We stand under the wedding whatchamacallit (some Hebrew name) and break a glass as a reminder of the Temple's destruction. I am thirty years old, Arthur is forty-one.

I'm still Marilyn Monroe, but I also become Marilyn Miller. This is the name Ben Lyon wanted to give me at the start of my career. The name of an actress he had known, who was dead.

For my previous honeymoon, I crossed the Pacific Ocean. Now we'll cross the Atlantic, as I must go to England and shoot *The Prince and the Showgirl* with Laurence Olivier—who's not only playing the prince, but also directing the film.

I have a strange feeling that my life is stammering. Improvised weddings in San Francisco, then White Plains. Airport mobs in Hawaii, then New York City. Policemen have to clear a path through the crowd so we can reach the plane. Arthur is stiffening at my side. My fans love me so much that they'll crush me to death.

"Can't breathe!" Arthur says. "Suffocating... Drowning in a human sea."

"Joe wasn't ready for this new role. He never got used to it."

"What new role?"

"Marilyn Monroe's husband."

I'm bringing twenty-seven suitcases, containing my main wardrobe. The airline charges us 1,500 dollars for the extra weight. The rest of my luggage, I mean my trunks, will follow by boat.

I, Marilyn

We can't even relax in the plane, as we're not traveling alone. Paula Strasberg and the Greenes are coming with us, as well as Hedda Rosten, Norman's wife, whom I take along as my private secretary. Things would have been easier if I had traveled with the Monroe Six. Arthur doesn't like either Paula Strasberg or Milton Greene. He says Paula knows as much about acting as a cleaning woman and that Milton tries to control me by stuffing me with drugs. Well, Milton does give me all kinds of pills. He gets them from his brother the doctor. At least Paula and Milton won't unite against Arthur, because they hate each other.

Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh welcome us with great warmth in London. We live in a wonderful country estate. We meet all the actors who're famous for playing Shakespeare, and also more dukes, duchesses and such than I could count. This nice cozy English honeymoon doesn't last long. As soon as we begin to shoot, things get nasty. Milton and I, we chose Laurence Olivier because we consider him one of the greatest living actors. We hope to make movies later with Marlon Brando and Charlie Chaplin. What we didn't know is that Laurence Olivier despises the Actors Studio method and Lee Strasberg. As he can't stand Paula, he makes her the butt of his angry jokes. He corrects my mistakes in an icy voice that sends needles through my flesh. Gee, I feel so stupid—and scared—when he delivers one of his sarcastic remarks to me. His aristocratic British accent makes them even more stinging. He wouldn't mind my being really stupid, anyway. On the first day, he asked the English crew to be patient with me.

"She's such a delightful little thing," he told them.

Whenever I suggest a change in the dialogue or some other improvement, he smiles at me in a condescending manner.

"All you have to do is be sexy, dear Marilyn," he says.

He wants me to accept his exact vision of every scene, as if he knew my character better than I do. I had an easier relationship with Joshua Logan. He asked me what I thought, trusted me, let me improvise in front of the rolling camera without worrying about the cost of the reels of film.

We reach an apex of bad taste when Vivien Leigh, who played my part in the theater performances of the story, attends the shooting and also smiles in a patronizing way, as if to say: "This poor Marilyn is so very vulgar!"

Although I'm surrounded by a crowd of people willing to go along with my every whim, I feel awfully lonely. Lee Strasberg comes to London for a few days, quarrels with Laurence Olivier and goes back to America. Hedda Rosten, who's supposed to help me as a secretary, drinks so much whisky that she's useless. While they all say they admire and envy me, I am

I, Marilyn

the unhappiest person in the world. I try to allay my fright with pills, but their effectiveness seems to decrease every day. I'm late, oh so late. Laurence Olivier calls Arthur.

"Why isn't she on the set yet?"

"She's not well. I'll see what I can do."

I hate it when they talk to Arthur about my work, as if he were my manager.

"Why are you getting involved in this?" I ask him.

Actually, if Laurence Olivier played in front of the Actors Studio members, everybody would say he's a bad actor. You haven't found your inner key, they would say. You should get in touch with your emotional memory, man. He plays the prince regent of Carpathia, an imaginary country in Central Europe. His acting is precise, his Teutonic accent perfect, but there's no life in his performance. He doesn't dig into his own deep self to create the character. Besides, he lacks experience as a director. As I've worked with the top guys in Hollywood, I notice it right away. He tries to compensate for his meager skill by an excess of authority. It feels as if the prince regent of Carpathia were trying to direct a film. Oh, I know what must drive him crazy: whenever we look at the rushes, people only stare at the "delightful little thing" on the screen. Okay, so he can play Hamlet and Richard III, but I'm going to steal this movie right under his nose!

We're forging ahead. Milton Greene acts as go-between because several people don't speak to each other anymore. Tensions run high. I feel exhausted. A terrible case of belly cramps keeps me in bed. Gosh, this is much worse than the usual pain. I go to London, where a doctor sends me to a hospital right away. I suffer a miscarriage in the middle of the night.

"Do you drink a lot of liquor? Take pills?" the doctor asks.

"Well, I don't know what you call a lot..."

"When you're pregnant, you'd better stop altogether, otherwise you'll never be able to have a baby. You have an inflamed uterus, what we call endometriosis."

"But, Doctor, I didn't even know I was pregnant."

"Don't drink so much anyway. Don't take so many pills. Doctor's advice!"

I'm so sad. I so hope to have a baby someday... People don't know I've lost a baby, but I show a doctor's certificate saying I'd better rest for a week or ten days, so the shooting is interrupted. I do want to finish this film, though. Milton sends a plane ticket to Mrs. Hohenberg, my shrink, believing she can help. Marilyn Monroe Productions is paying for this, which means I'm spending my own money. I hope I'm not going to regret the Fox studio eventually.

I, Marilyn

“You depend too much on your coach,” Mrs. Hohenberg says. “You can’t stand on your own two feet as long as she’s around.”

Milton agrees. I’m too weak to resist their will, so they send Paula Strasberg back to New York City. What do you know? I do regain my bearings without her. I feel quite strong and confident. It seems she kept Laurence Olivier from finding his inner director’s key, too. As soon as she’s gone, he finishes the filming in a jiffy. The showgirl charms the prince, foils a plot against him, gives up her love so he can return to his country... The movie critics were eager to make fun of my confrontation with a guy who had read all of Shakespeare when he was five years old. They declare themselves pleasantly surprised when they see the film.

Thus, in spite of many mishaps, everything turns out okay in the end. Is this a typical movie conclusion or what?

Before flying back home, I must carry out a silly formality: go say hello to the queen! She invites me to attend the premiere of some English film in a theater. I’m not too late. I mean, I enter the theater just in time to see the word “end”, which means the dear queen is still there. The Hollywood crowd had warned me I could expect to meet the queen, so I asked Nana Karger, the most refined person I know, how I should behave.

“Look her straight in the eye and say to yourself: I’m just as pretty as you are.”

I’m prettier, everybody would agree about that, but I do feel bashful and somewhat shaky when I have to curtsy. Also, she troubles me by saying we’re neighbors.

“How is it possible? We live in the country, very far from Buckingham Palace.”

“Indeed, but you’re living near our Windsor castle.”

“Oh, the castle belongs to you? They let me ride a bike in the park. They gave me a special permit.”

“Do you ride a bike? Really?” princess Margaret asks.

I bet she only rides horses. The queen compliments me on my curtsy.

“I curtsy in the film, you know, because of the prince, so I practiced a lot.”

I think of Norma Jeane. She never imagined she would curtsy to the queen of England some day...

This painful crisis, I mean that’s what a shooting always turns into, is over at last. I’ll live again.

But another crisis looms ahead. Something broke in my relationship with Arthur. He wasn’t ready to face the fuss and the strain. It began with the crowd in the airport trying to smother me. Then it appeared that all the people around us hated each other, so that I had to

I, Marilyn

wonder whether some of them maybe hated me, too. I gobbled red pills because I couldn't sleep. I gobbled blue pills because I couldn't wake up. So okay, I was late once or twice or a thousand times. I was scared, I panicked, I pretended to be sick and then I was really sick. Gee, I know that I'm not a pleasant companion during a shooting. I should have told him: "Don't come, Daddy... Stay home and take it easy. You'll meet the queen some other time." I would have maddened Paula Strasberg, Milton Greene and Laurence Olivier with my wild moods, but it's okay, as they're paid for it anyway.

One day, Arthur left his black notebook on the living-room's table. I mean, here I am picking up my script and right next to it, did he leave it there on purpose so I would read it, this little leather-covered notebook where he scribbles his bright ideas, going to use them in his next play I suppose, right there for me to see: "Laurence Olivier says she's a bothersome bitch—beginning to understand him—couldn't find a decent answer—thought she was an angel—how wrong—same mistake twice—just like Mary." I couldn't read more through my tears. Mary, his first wife. He told me she let him down, whatever that means.

The fumbled shooting was nothing unusual. He didn't know it would turn out okay in the end. Joe hated it too.

He compares me to Mary and I compare him to Joe. Wow, what a mess!

I, Marilyn

11 SOME LIKE IT HOT

We sail home in November, 1956. The shooting being over, we become a regular husband and wife again. This is when our real honeymoon begins, actually. I love my Daddy! He calls me Sugar.

His country place evokes too many memories of his failed marriage. He sells it and buys another one, also in Connecticut. While it is being renovated, we live in Amagansett, a resort on Long Island. We take long walks along the beach like two lovers. I sleep much better: I mean, I only need two or three red pills now. We move into the new house, and also into a 57th street apartment. Arthur doesn't really care how it is decorated, so I follow my own taste and choose to paint it a pure white color. Through a stroke of sheer luck, I buy Fredric March's white piano in an auction.

"It belonged to my mother for a while," I tell Arthur. "But then, when she went to the hospital, the people sold it to pay the rent."

I try to play Little Bo-Peep. Well, I hear Little Bo-Peep, but Arthur doesn't.

"Last time I played it was more than twenty years ago, so what can you expect?"

I resume my work at the Actors Studio. Arthur doesn't like the Strasbergs, but he agrees that their teaching improved my skills as an actress. He doesn't like Milton Greene either.

"Why should you let him have half of your company's profit?" he asks. "You don't need the man. I could help you choose scripts that would really highlight your talent. I know you well enough."

He is writing one himself, based on *The Misfits*, a short story he published in the magazine Esquire.

To please him, I sacrifice Milton in order to keep the Strasbergs. I don't feel so proud of myself... He was a close friend, one of the few people I trusted. Arthur was jealous, I believe.

My lawyers take care of everything. They say Milton is furious. At first, he pretends I owe him two million dollars for the broken contract. Are you kidding? He earned plenty on my back, so why should I give him more? Okay, so he sells me his share of the company for 100,000 dollars. My lawyers are surprised, as they were ready to pay much more.

I, Marilyn

“My interest in Marilyn’s career wasn’t for gain,” Milton tells the press. “She needed me at the time and I put at her complete disposal whatever abilities I possessed.”

In July, 1957, my doctor says I’m pregnant again. I hope everything will turn out fine this time. Oh I love children so much... I often take care of Arthur’s kids, but they’re not as much fun as tiny tots. Jane is fourteen and Robert nine.

My breasts hurt. This happens when you’re pregnant. I also suffer from belly pains. As I’m not hungry at all, I eat very little. I need to alleviate my cramps, but I remember that doc in London, so I try to control my intake of pills. Also, I don’t drink anything stronger than sherry.

On August 1st, in our Connecticut house, a ghastly pain knocks me down. I mean, I scream, then faint like a lady in a romantic novel. Arthur, who finds me unconscious on the floor, calls an ambulance that rushes me to a Manhattan hospital. The doctors decide that surgery is necessary.

“It was an ectopic pregnancy,” the surgeon tells me when I wake up.

“Oh Gosh, did I lose the baby?”

“Fetus hadn’t reached the uterus: stuck in a fallopian tube. Had to terminate the pregnancy. You could have died.”

“Will I be able to have babies at all?”

“You never know. Doesn’t look too good, though. Tube seems to be blocked up. May be due to inflammation. Have you ever aborted?”

“Well...”

“Botched abortion might explain it.”

“I didn’t feel well today, so I just drank a cup of coffee for breakfast. Then I had these awful cramps... It hurt so much that I took some pills...”

“How many pills?”

“Well, at first two or three, but it didn’t really help, so maybe another two or three. Say maybe eight altogether. Eight pills on an empty stomach, I guess that’s pretty bad. Do you think it could have killed the baby, doctor?”

“I smelled some alcohol, too.”

“Oh, right. A couple glasses of sherry. So my stomach wasn’t empty after all.”

“This baby was doomed anyway. Could try to unblock the tube. Very delicate surgery. Fails most of the time. Now listen to me: if we ever unblock and you want to have babies, you’d better give up the drugs and the drinks.”

I, Marilyn

“I know. A doctor said the same thing in London.”

“At least give up either one. Bad combination.”

How could I stop, really? I was so happy when I learned I was pregnant. I’m married to a wonderful husband. He’s got brains and he really cares for me. I live in a magnificent apartment in town. When it’s too hot there, I can retire to a country estate that reminds me of the queen’s castle. I’d call this life perfect if it didn’t lack the one thing I yearn for above all: children. I would love to have, oh, many of them. I’d breast-feed them, sing lullabies to them, drive them to school, read fairy tales, buy toys. But now, not only did I lose the baby, but they say maybe I won’t ever be able to have any. Once more, happiness forsakes me. Euphoria turns into misery. Without pills, I just can’t face the terrifying abyss of the night. When I wake up, the horror of my life jumps at me like a wild beast. Without a glass of vodka to keep the beast away, I can’t leave my bed.

Often, I feel too lazy to dress. Everybody knows I sleep without a nightgown. The journalists love to ask me about it.

“What do you have on at night, Marilyn?”

“Chanel number five.”

I also say: “the radio,” sometimes. These answers were made up by the Fox public relations service long ago. Actually, I wear a bra, otherwise my breasts would sag. So when I don’t dress, I’ll stay most of the day with my bra on and nothing else. Lena, my new maid, finds me somewhat strange, I bet.

I eat too much. I gained twenty pounds. I’m just plain ugly.

Arthur tries to lift my spirits by taking me out. We see the Rostens or other friends. In Brooklyn for a party, I don’t even know these people, a twelfth floor apartment—sitting on the window sill, looking outside without seeing anything. Who’s this? Oh, Norman...

“Where are you, Marilyn? Come back with us!”

“It would take but a few seconds. Twelve floors. Nobody would notice.”

“I’d notice, and also all the other people here. Millions would notice.”

“Life is too hard.”

“This is true for everybody, Marilyn. I also want to get it over with, sometimes.”

“You, Norman? Don’t! Think of Hedda and your lovely Patricia.”

“Listen, Marilyn. Let’s make a pact. If one of us wants to commit suicide, he calls the other one, who’ll then try to talk him out of it.”

“Yeah, I guess it’s not a bad idea.”

“Promise me you’ll do it.”

I, Marilyn

“I promise.”

I don't know whether I want to die. Gee, I'd like to sleep and escape the fright that crushes me day and night. I down red pills and blue pills and all the other colors in the rainbow, as if they were so much candy. Often, my mind gets muddled. How many have I gulped? I've never been able to count right. Well, I'm still awake and the pain ain't gone, so I swallow more. I have several doctor friends who write prescriptions. My medicine chest is full of bottles and stuff. I combine colors that do not fit so well together. I pass out. Arthur finds me lying on the carpet, moaning noisily, with a yellow liquid dribbling at the corner of my mouth. Or maybe I seem to be breathing by fits and starts. He calls the hospital. They come with oxygen and revive me. So he saved my life once more. Thanks but no thanks.

He goes to some other city where they're rehearsing one of his plays. Then Lena finds me moaning and groaning on the ground and calls the hospital. An ambulance takes me there. They pump my stomach or something. When I wake up, Norman Rosten is sitting by my bed.

“How do you feel, my dear?”

“Alive... Too bad... All the goddam... Oh shit!”

We celebrate Christmas with the Strasbergs. To Arthur, I offer a new set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. To Lee, books and records. To Susan, a Chagall drawing. To Paula, a pearl necklace with a diamond clasp. The Emperor of Japan gave it to me when I was in Tokyo with Joe. She's always admired it. To John, their son, I offer my white Thunderbird. He's eighteen. A nice kid. I know he dreams of owning a car.

People send scripts to my production company all the time. I receive so much regular mail, fan mail, phone calls, actually, that I hire a secretary, May Reis, to take care of everything.

Billy Wilder, the director of *The Seven Year Itch*, sends me a synopsis called *Some Like It Hot*. I'd be a singer—one more!—called Sugar Kane. She belongs to a women's orchestra in 1925 or so. Two men, musicians who play double-bass and saxophone, dress as women and hide in the orchestra to escape some gangsters. This leads to equivocal and funny situations, but I wonder whether I'd be able to play the singer. I mean, could I really become friends with men dressed as women? I call Lee Strasberg to tell him about my reservations.

“I just can't believe this story. I'm supposed to become cozy with these two new girls, but actually they're men in drag. This doesn't make sense. After all, I know they're men, don't I?”

I, Marilyn

“You know it, Marilyn, but your character doesn’t. So you must imagine they’re women anyway. I’ll tell you what I think. In real life, you find it very difficult to have a relationship with other women. They’re always jealous of you. When you come into a room, all the men flock around, but the women keep their distance. So you’ve never had a woman as a close friend.”

“Or at least, not many. You’re almost right.”

“So then, here suddenly are two women and, hey, they want to become your friends! They appreciate you. For the first time in your life, you have female friends.”

“I think I understand what you mean...”

After this conversation, I accept the script. In July, 1958, I fly to Los Angeles for the shooting. At about the same time, Arthur sends the script of *The Misfits* to John Huston, who finds it great and agrees to shoot it. He suggests Clark Gable for the leading male part. Clark Gable also says okay.

Gee I can’t get over the loss of my baby. I feel so empty, so frail. The anxiety that wraps me like a shroud during a shooting is ten times more intense than before.

I need more and more time, every morning, to change the poor sleepless wreck floating on a chemical sea into Marilyn the shining star. I’m four hours late when I reach the set of *Some Like It Hot*. Then I’m too sleepy or too nervous, or I could as well say nervy and sleepous, to remember my lines.

I’m supposed to say: “It’s me, Sugar” as I enter my two partners’ bedroom. I just fail to put these simple words in the right order. I say: “It’s Sugar, me,” or: “Sugar, it’s me.” Billy writes the words on a blackboard. They shoot forty-seven takes before I get it right. For another scene, I’m looking for a bottle of whisky. I must open a drawer and ask: “Where is that bourbon?” This is a strange question. I mean, I just can’t remember it at all. Billy writes it on a piece of paper, which he drops inside the drawer. He shoots sixty-seven takes. Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis, who play the two musicians, complain because they have to spend hours on high heels. I also spend hours on high heels, but do I complain?

I think Tony Curtis hates me. He’s jealous because I’m the star.

“What is it like to kiss Marilyn Monroe?” a journalist asks him.

“Marilyn? Kissing her is like kissing Hitler.”

Billy Wilder is okay. He comes to my rescue.

“I’ve an aunt in Vienna who’s an actress. Her name is Mildred Lachenfarber. She’s always on time on the set. She never ever botches her lines. Now you could choose her as your leading lady, but I doubt you’d earn a nickel.”

I, Marilyn

I like Billy. He's so funny with his small hat! We fight, but he respects me. Hey, in my first scene, in the train, I'm just one of the girls... This is wrong.

"She's the heroine," I tell Billy. "You got to do something so people will know."

"We'll pan on her, then we'll have a close-up."

"This isn't enough. You should establish her character right away."

"Don't worry, Marilyn."

"Who's worrying?"

But when I see the rushes after the scene is shot, I know that I'm right.

"If you don't find a better way of introducing me, you'd better look for another blonde, 'cause I'll be in Connecticut with my husband!"

He spends the evening with I. A. L. Diamond, the scriptwriter. We call him Iz, actually, for Isadore. He says he added A and L because it looked interesting after I. His real name isn't Diamond either, but some crazy Rumanian name. If you want funny, you go and get Iz. He wrote that hilarious movie, *Monkey Business*, where I was the so-called secretary of good old Charlie Coburn.

Okay, so in the morning we shoot the new scene. I'm running like hell on the platform, quite embarrassed by my high heels and my ukulele, as the train is already huffing and puffing. Suddenly, a great plume of steam seems to slap my bottom and I jump aside angrily... Wow, isn't that better?

We go on location south of Los Angeles to shoot beach scenes. I'm so glad to leave the stuffy sound stage and breathe fresh air that I say my lines perfectly and get all my scenes right in the first take. They've shouted and threatened to resign and what, but we have a film in the end. We always do.

I'm pregnant. Another ectopic pregnancy. I lose the baby on December 16, 1958.

12 YVES MONTAND

After the shooting of *Some Like It Hot*, I go back to New York City. The Broadway premiere of the film, on March 29, 1959, is a fantastic success. The critics say this is my best movie—and also, that playing dumb blondes as well as I do requires real talent. What's more, the public likes the film and my company earns a lot of money.

So far, my relationship with Arthur always improved when a shooting was over. Not this time. Gosh, I can't gather enough strength to reduce my need of pills and alcohol. I wish I could find some other way of forgetting the baby's loss. Arthur complains he's become my pill supplier and nothing else. We hardly talk to each other anymore. He hasn't written a theater play for a long time. Hey, don't blame me! Actually, I've found a new friend: his father, Isadore. He's not a funny guy like Iz Diamond, but a nice old man who treats me just like any other woman. While Arthur fell in love with Marilyn Monroe, I mean miss Golden Dreams, and thus finds poor real me quite disappointing, his father doesn't seem to know about stars and Hollywood.

Arthur does complete the script of *The Misfits*. I'm ready to work, but Clark Gable is busy with some other project. Fox submits a movie for me: *Let's Make Love*, a feeble comedy with the usual singer trying to charm the usual billionaire. I have to accept, because I promised I'd shoot four films in seven years for them. This will be the second film of my contract, after *Bus Stop*, as *The Prince and the Showgirl* was produced by my company and Warner and *Some Like It Hot* by my company and United Artists. Then we'll shoot *The Misfits* for my company.

Fox offers me exactly the same parts as when I began my career. They despise me, these jerks. They think I'm stupid, even though I earn millions for them. Not only does the script of *Let's Make Love* fail to show off my talent as an actress, but it fails to show me off at all. The people who'll go and see it because they like Marilyn Monroe will feel shortchanged. I ask Arthur to work on the script so my character becomes livelier and funnier. The Studio can't refuse my tinkering. They know I'd quit if they did. Although it looked like a hopeless case and Arthur doesn't usually write funny stuff, the new script is indeed somewhat superior to the old one.

I, Marilyn

Things don't turn out that good. I'd like Billy Wilder to direct the film. When we finished *Some Like It Hot*, he swore he would never work with me anymore, what with my being late and forgetting my lines. Recently, though, he told me he wasn't angry with me anymore. That's swell, only he's shooting a new film with Jack Lemmon and Shirley MacLaine, *The Apartment*, so he's not available. The Studio suggests George Cukor, who made movies with all the great stars: Greta Garbo, Jean Harlow, Joan Crawford, Ingrid Bergman.

Okay, so now we have a director, but the male lead, Gregory Peck, gets upset because I come out better than him in the script as improved by Arthur. He retires, the big dork. Good riddance! The studio offers the role to Yul Brynner, Cary Grant, Rock Huston and Charlton Heston. They're all busy with other movies—or afraid of me.

In September, 1959, Arthur takes me out to listen to a recital of French singer and actor Yves Montand. He knows him, as well as his wife Simone Signoret. He went to Paris and saw them in the French version of his play *The Crucible*, which they also made into a movie. We have dinner with them after the show. They're both quite pleasant people.

Really, I've always admired Yves Montand. When I shared a small apartment with Shelley Winters, we made up a list of the sexiest men in the world. At the top were Ernest Hemingway, Albert Einstein, John Huston. Among the actors, I remember two Frenchies: Charles Boyer and Yves Montand. We had seen him in a marvelous film, *Gates of the Night*. He also made a very impressive thriller, *The Wages of Fear*, some years ago. George Cukor says he'd be perfect in the part. Yves Montand is quite eager to shoot a film in glorious Hollywood. I tell the press he's the most attractive man I've ever met, next to Marlon Brando—and my husband, of course.

In January, 1960, we cross the country once more. Arthur comes along as my manager, sort of. He counts the pills so they don't need to pump my stomach. No love involved, but a kind of business relationship.

When I need to unload my heavy heart, I talk to Whitey Snyder, my makeup man, my faithful confidant.

Oh, I found another close friend: Ralph Roberts, an actor and masseur. He is so tall and strong that people call him "Big Ralph." I met him last year at the Strasbergs'. That was a strange encounter. I wasn't made up, so he didn't recognize me.

"What do you do for a living?" he asked me.

"I'm an actress."

"Oh yeah? You seem quite young for that."

I, Marilyn

Did he think I was a teenager or what?

“Who was that?” he asked Susan Strasberg when I was gone. “I didn’t catch the name, but she said she was an actress.”

“That was Marilyn,” Susan said.

I saw him again a few days later.

“We met the other day in the kitchen, but I fear I didn’t know who you were. I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. I’m glad to know that I’m not all that recognizable.”

I told him he should go to Hollywood if he really wanted to become an actor. In New York, he was so successful as a masseur—Paula recommended him to everybody—that he didn’t have time to attend auditions for new plays. But then, his reputation preceded him here, so that now he is the stars’ favorite masseur. At least he’s mine! He comes every morning to my room in the Beverly Hills Hotel and helps me regain some kind of human shape after the night’s decay. Strange as it is, I trust him like nobody else. I tell him things I have revealed to no other breathing soul.

I’m staying with Arthur in bungalow #21 of the Beverly Hills Hotel, next to Yves Montand and Simone Signoret, they are in #20.

“Hey, let’s go shopping! Let me just get my wig and sunglasses...”

I take Simone to Rodeo Drive. She’s not interested in fancy clothes. She wants to buy blue jeans, which she finds very exotic.

You’d never think she’s French, actually.

“You speak English so well... Better than me, anyway. You remind me of Laurence Olivier. I mean, not the way you look, of course, but the way you speak...”

“I was an English teacher, you know, before I earned enough money as an actress to quit.”

Yves Montand, on the other hand, knows very little English. It doesn’t seem to bother him. When he doesn’t know a word, he uses a French one without missing a beat. He’s so funny! Arthur gives him English lessons so he can play his part in the movie.

“He dropped out of school when he was eleven and started working,” Simone tells me. “He was born in Italy. Then his parents came to France to escape fascism. He worked as a barman, as a hairdresser, or in a factory. At the same time, he was perfecting a song and dance number. At eighteen, he began to appear in Marseille’s music-halls, then he went to Paris.”

Arthur says we’re alike, Yves and I: artists molded by a tough working-class childhood, overflowing with vitality and sensuality. You might as well compare Yves to Joe DiMaggio—tall Italians with rough faces, who could play bad boys in the movies.

I, Marilyn

We begin shooting in February, 1960. Even after Arthur's tinkering, the script is lousy. Gosh, I'm angry at myself. Should have refused. Tumbled back to the time when I used to play in shitty movies. Arthur has to put up with my dark moods when we're just the two of us. He notices that I become more fun when we are with Simone and Yves, also I don't seem to need as many pills to escape reality, so he tries to have us spend as much time as possible with them.

In March, he goes to Nevada, where the producer and the art director of *The Misfits* are looking for landscapes. He can't stand me anymore, I guess. He comes back, spends a few days in Los Angeles, then flies to New York City, pretending his kids need him, then to Europe where some theater is rehearsing one of his plays. He's leaving me, yeah, betraying me, like all the others.

We fought, it was pretty ugly sometimes, but he helped me overcome my despair. Without him, getting ready everyday becomes oh so difficult. I don't mean physically—thanks to Big Ralph and the others—but mentally. I need someone to hold my hand, to boost my confidence, to build up my courage so I can become Marilyn and face the camera. Okay, here I am in my bloody bungalow, I mean, instead of being on the set. Mid-afternoon, Yves calls Simone and asks her to bring me over dead or alive. She knocks on my door. I hear a vague sound. I'm floating in the middle of a thick gray mist, so how could I move? A few hours later, Yves is back from the Studio. This guy has a hot Latin temper. Gets angry pretty easily. Kicks my door and shouts:

"Shooting is canceled today because there is one absent. Next time, you tell me before. I'm not your enemy, I'm your partner, but capricious little girls have never amused me."

I'm too upset (and messed up) to answer. The one thing I can do is shed a gallon of bitter tears. Around 10 P. M., I begin to emerge from my lethargy and I call Arthur in Europe to tell him what happened.

"Please call them and fix things up, tell them I'm sorry, oh please oh please..."

A little before midnight, Yves and Simone knock on my door again. Come in, come in! I'm so ashamed! I'm crying. I fall into Simone's arms, sobbing like a child.

"Oh I'm bad, I'm bad, I'm bad... I won't do it gain. I promise. Oh please believe me..."

"Good," Yves says. "Just be on time tomorrow morning."

They console and comfort me. I love them both!

Simone flies back to France. She has a shooting scheduled on the spring.

I, Marilyn

“I play a sketch in a movie about famous love stories,” she tells me. “I’m a nineteenth-century woman who throws acid at her unfaithful lover.”

She seems rather unhappy to leave Yves alone with me. I hope she doesn’t throw acid at me. I’m having an affair on screen with her husband, just pretending of course, but we do shoot a kiss twenty times now and then. When he holds me in his arms and presses his lips upon mine, sure it’s not for real, but quite pleasant nonetheless. Well, I’ve known many men, no denying that, so I can tell he also finds it quite pleasant.

Okay then, Simone has been gone about ten days, late one evening I suddenly feel oh gee can’t explain it giddy with lust, and I drink a few glasses of champagne to cool down but the bubbly nectar has the opposite effect. I’m in bed already. I get up, take off my bra, throw my mink coat over my shoulders and go knock next door. Not the first time I’m naked under my fur coat to seduce a man. Yves Montand doesn’t resist any longer than the previous ones.

In *Let’s Make Love*, I sing *My Heart Belongs to Daddy*. This is a six-minute number, with eight dancers, which we shoot dozens of times after two full weeks of rehearsal. The tight hand-made sweater I wear gets so wet after every take that the knitter has to keep making new ones.

I see a psychoanalyst in Los Angeles now, Dr. Greenson. He’s a serious man. When I look at his deep and heavy black eyes, I feel safe, somehow. We talk about this song, I mean *My Heart Belongs to Daddy*. I’ve always longed for a father. I hoped Arthur, who’s ten years older than me and so intelligent, could play the part. I don’t know why, he began to obey me, by and by. He prepares my pills, uncorks my champagne bottles, works on the script when I ask him to. He has become one more employee, like my make-up guy and my driver. Yves is really different. He treats me as a spoiled child. He wants *me* to obey him.

“You be on time tomorrow,” he orders.

Even though he isn’t older than me, he’s just the daddy I need!

Yves plots with Dr. Greenson to control my intake of pills. Dr. Greenson says I mix all kinds of barbiturates and narcotics in a dangerous way.

“How do you get them?”

“I go see doctors.”

“Several doctors?”

“Well... I know I shouldn’t...”

“You coax them into prescribing strong stuff. They don’t dare refuse the demands of a world-famous star, of course. You’d better stop.”

I, Marilyn

“I promise I’ll stop, doctor.”

“They know what you’re doing. They’re just like common criminals.”

He wonders whether my insomnia doesn’t have a simple physical cause.

“You’re underfed, maybe.”

“What do you mean?”

“You don’t eat enough. Besides, you’re scared that you won’t be able to sleep, which doesn’t help. You should try a glass of warm milk in the evening.”

“If I eat too much, I’ll be fat and ugly. You know, I eat lots of raw carrots, twelve a day at least. They’re delicious with champagne.”

“Maybe your anxiety can be explained by hypoglycemia. Lack of sugar.”

“Champagne is sweet.”

“Not the right kind of sugar. You should eat some bread and pasta. Also meat or fish. Your skin is too white. You should check your blood count.”

To please Yves and Dr. Greenson, I nearly stop taking pills. I mean, I stick to one kind of sleeping tablets. I’m on time. I say my lines just right for the first take. Instead of looking at Paula Strasberg for approval, I’m happy if Yves is satisfied.

“You know why Yves Montand sees you as a spoiled child?” Dr. Greenson asks. “Because you choose to present yourself to the world as a child. You consider yourself a poor ill-treated orphan. When you need to feel a victim, you provoke and irritate the people around you until they get angry. Then you can say, Oh I’m a poor orphan whom nobody loves.”

I, Marilyn

13 THE MISFITS

We don't really try to hide. How could we? As soon as the rumor of "Yves-and-Marilyn" begins to float in the Hollywood breeze, journalists and photographers creep into the bushes around the Beverly Hills Hotel to spy on us. We go to Tinsel town parties together. I'm free, since I don't live with Arthur anymore. The journalists spill lots of ink over the affair. They try to whip it up into a big scandal, because I'm still married. Fox hopes the publicity will bring the public to the theaters, in spite of the film's mediocrity.

The French journalists ask Simone about it, of course.

"If Marilyn is in love with my husband," she says, "it proves she has good taste. For I am in love with him too."

Our idyll doesn't last long. After two months, the shooting comes to an end and my happiness too. Yves goes back to France and to Simone. He talks to the French press, too.

"She is an enchanting child, I've never met anyone quite like her, but she is still a child. I'm sorry, but nothing will break up my marriage."

What else could he say? He wants to assuage Simone's pain. I know it was more than a small passing thing. When a man loves me, I can sense it. He revealed his true feelings to a journalist I know (I wish he had told this to me!)

"If I was not married and if Marilyn was not married, I would not object to marrying her."

In July, 1960, I spend a few days in New York City. They're waiting for me in Reno, Nevada, for the shooting of *The Misfits*. Susan Strasberg drives me to the airport.

"I've never seen you so tired, Marilyn."

"They just left me one week between the end of the last shooting and the beginning of the next one. I feel sad because Fate plays jokes on me, like giving me a taste of happiness and then depriving me of it... I met the right man, but he went away."

"Aren't you flying to Nevada?"

"I'm going to Los Angeles first. I have to attend a party tomorrow night. You know, the Democratic convention is taking place over there. The party is in the beach house of Peter Crawford, whom I knew when he was an actor. Gee, that house is grand. It belonged to Louis

I, Marilyn

B. Mayer, you know, who founded MGM. You could put a battleship in the swimming-pool. Pete is honoring his brother-in-law, Jack Kennedy.”

“The senator? The candidate for president?”

“I hope he is elected. It would be nice to have a young and handsome president, for a change.”

After two days in Los Angeles, I fly to Reno. When the plane lands, I see a whole welcome committee on the tarmac. There’s a fat lady who carries a bunch of flowers and several guys who look like City Hall officials. One of them comes aboard.

“Is this crowd for me?” I ask him.

“Of course, miss Monroe. The wife of the Governor came in person. She’s carrying the flowers...”

“Nobody told me about it. I’ll have to change and put on some make-up...”

They’re waiting for Marilyn Monroe, but I wear blue jeans and tennis shoes and I’m as ugly as can be. I change into one of my dresses in the plane’s lavatory. I comb my hair, paint my eyes and my lips, and so on. I see a half-baked Marilyn in the mirror, but what else can you expect? It took me only thirty minutes.

The fat lady and the others must be puzzled: the door of the plane opened, all the passengers came out, except me, and then they have to spend half an hour in the blazing sun waiting for me. You want Marilyn? Got to merit her.

At least in this movie I’m not playing a singer or a dancer, but a woman, Roslyn, who doesn’t know what to do with herself. She’s in Reno to divorce. There she falls in love with an old cowboy who catches mustangs—ponies returned to the wild—with two companions. The three guys don’t know where they’re headed either. In the twentieth century, horses and cowboys have become useless. The captured mustangs are made into dog food.

For the first time, I play a part custom-made for me by someone who knows me well, my own husband. Roslyn is confused, like me. She’s fragile, she’s anxious. She’s late, she mumbles and stutters, she sometimes says things that make no sense. People will see the real Marilyn Monroe at last.

Playing fragile and anxious is the easiest thing in the world. Gee, I can’t stop thinking about Yves. Now he’s gone, nobody tells me Stop taking those pills and You be on time tomorrow. My bad habits take hold of me again. Arthur despises me, I hate him. I don’t live with him anymore, but with Paula Strasberg.

I, Marilyn

This so-called custom-made part is a joke. The three cowboys are the real heroes of the movie. They don't need Roslyn. The original short story didn't even have such a character. Three years ago, when Arthur began to write the first outline of the script, he was in love with me. The Roslyn he created then was a fine woman—generous, idealistic, radiant. She loved animals and tried to prevent the cowboys from sending the mustangs to the slaughterhouse. In the final script, she's become a bitter woman, humorless and half-crazy. What's more, Arthur changes the dialogues even while we're shooting. He rewrites entire scenes at night, hands me my lines at the last minute, hey you really want me to be late on the set, and they're getting kinda meaningless like he's trying to push my character to the edge of the story. The film is resting on Clark Gable's shoulders. I'm playing a shallow supporting role, like I did long ago in *Asphalt Jungle*.

Why don't you go on without me, then? Why should I get up? On time? Whose time? Leave me alone... My belly hurts like hell. Can't eat anymore. I miss several days of shooting. John Huston doesn't complain. Doesn't seem to care about this movie. Plays dice every night in the Reno casinos. Loses thousands, they say. Clark Gable is a quiet man, like Bob Mitchum. He waits patiently. He understands I'm unhappy. In the end, I reach such a state that I can hardly stand up in front of the camera. Every morning, Whitey Snider makes me up in my bed. Flips me like a pancake. Big Ralph props me up so I walk to the car, then from the car to the set. The cameraman says he can't shoot me anymore cause my eyes don't focus. John Huston stops the shooting while I fly to Los Angeles. The official report says I'm exhausted. Sounds right, considering summer weather in Nevada. The temperature stays over one hundred in the shade, and we shoot in the sun most of the time.

Dr. Greenson sends me to a clinic for ten days or so. Some rest won't hurt, but hey, I could have gone on working. John Huston is making up this whole story. I know why he needs to stop filming: he wants to milk United Artists, who finances the movie, for extra money. Seems the casinos threaten to seize our cameras and props unless John comes up with the fifty thousand dollars he owes them. Instead of revealing he is a gambling addict, he takes pretext of my bad reputation to pretend I can't act anymore. So who's getting the blame? Marilyn, as usual.

Joe DiMaggio visits me in the clinic. I've seen him several times since our divorce. I know he still loves me.

"Life is strange, Joe, don't you think? Remember that stupid scene when you and Frank Sinatra broke through the door of some old lady? Me, I was hiding under my sheets with what's his name—gee, I have forgotten the fellow's name..."

I, Marilyn

Frank Sinatra also comes to the clinic, as well as Marlon Brando. All the top guys love me!

Dr. Greenson finds a way of reducing my anxiety. I'm allowed one kind of pill only: Nembutal, a powerful barbiturate. Medication is okay, he says, as long as it stays under control. He writes down the exact doses. I must obey him.

When I fly back to Reno, the cast and crew give a warm welcome party for me. They enjoyed their ten days off, so they're quite relaxed and happy. Actually, I feel much better too. I've lost weight. Everybody says I've never been so good-looking. The shooting resumes without any mishap and ends towards the end of October.

Everybody is always so sad when the team disbands. This time, oh the parting is heart-breaking. We have faced terrible hardships together—some because of me, but hey I ain't the only guilty one. One of the cowboys, Montgomery Clift, is as erratic and unreliable as me, I swear. He was often too drunk to work. John Huston was the worst, really, after his nights at the casino. Either he fell asleep in his director's chair or he was more preoccupied by his debts than by the movie. The script didn't make sense. And then this awful desert heat... We don't feel like separating, though. Even the people who couldn't stand my being late now seem to love me. Some will go back to Hollywood, others to New York. John Huston lives in Ireland. The film is wobbly but very moving, as all the actors play characters close to their own selves.

I'm back in New York on November 11. On November 16, Paula Strasberg calls me on the phone with terrible news:

"Clark Gable just died of a heart attack."

"Gosh, I killed him."

"Of course not. You know his heart was weak. He had an attack just after we finished shooting, and that was already his third. Look, the man smoke three packs of cigarettes a day for thirty years."

"He was always so nice to me on the set, but he must have been boiling inside when I was late."

"I felt he was much angrier with John Huston for his gambling and drinking."

"I considered him my father. I mean, when I was a kid, it was a fantasy of mine, that he was my real father. Maybe I was rotten on the set to hurt him, because my father forsaked me."

"Forget that Freudian bullshit, Marilyn. This Dr. Greensonofabitch isn't a good influence, let me tell you..."

I, Marilyn

“I think he was fifty-nine. His wife is pregnant. He was so happy... His first child, you know.”

Now I feel I'm really an orphan.

I tell the journalists that things are over between Arthur and I.

He lives in the country house. The room where he worked in the New York apartment is empty. My inner life is as empty as this room. What it certainly doesn't contain is a single particle of hope. Will I spend the night of Christmas alone for the first time in my life? Gee, can't stand the prospect. I lean out of the window. It would be so easy. Just have to yield to the part of me that wants to do it. Never suffer anymore... Suddenly, two strong arms grab my waist. Lena, my maid.

“No, no, Lena, let me die! I want to die. I don't deserve to live. What have I done with my life? It's Christmas... Christmas... Alone... Nobody!”

On Christmas day, the doorman calls to announce a visitor:

“Mr. DiMaggio here to see you, miss Monroe.”

“Oh, sure, let him come up!”

I open the door as soon as he knocks.

“Merry Christmas, Marilyn.”

“Oh, Joe, I'm so glad you came... What's this, a Christmas tree?”

“It does look a little like one, but it's some kind of Brazilian plant. It won't die like a tree.”

“You're so sweet...”

I sometimes spend a night with him. I also share Frank Sinatra's room in the Waldorf Astoria for a few days. Often, when I feel too lonely, I sleep in the apartment of Lee and Paula Strasberg.

I wonder whether I'll reach a ripe old age. I'm getting used to waking up in the hospital after swallowing too many pills. Who brought me there? I remember nothing. They gave me oxygen and pumped my stomach again. Okay, so I write my will. I'm not that rich, actually. If I didn't receive a share of the profits of *Some Like It Hot*, the only box-office winner my company ever produced, I'd be poor I believe. I bequeath ten thousand dollars to Berneice Miracle, the daughter of Gladys and her first husband, Baker. She wrote to me a few years ago from Florida and I saw her twice. Also ten thousand to May Reis, my private secretary (who just resigned to get married), and five to the Rostens for the education of Patricia, their

I, Marilyn

daughter. I establish a trust fund for my mother's care. I leave my belongings and the bulk of my estate to Lee Strasberg.

Rupert Allan, my Hollywood press agent and friend, just moved to Monte Carlo with another client of his, Grace Kelly. After seeing *The Prince and the Showgirl*, she decided to become a princess! Lois Weber, my New York press agent, is too busy to represent me on both coasts and travel with me, so Rupert recommends a colleague, Patricia Newcomb.

The first thing she takes care of is my divorce.

"We'll do it in Ciudad Juarez. This means flying to El Paso, Texas, and crossing the border."

"You mean in Mexico?"

"Your attorney is coming with us. He knows a judge there. He's pleading incompatibility of character. We'll do it in January. On the 20th. This is the day of Kennedy's inauguration, so I hope the press will be in Washington, D.C. and will leave you alone."

A small bunch of journalists and photographers does follow us to Ciudad Juarez, but Pat keeps them at a distance. While I feel awfully sluggish, she's so full of energy! I pity all these reporters, they're working after all, so I say a few words to them before flying back to New York.

"I'm upset and I can't talk a lot right now. I'm quite hungry, too, but I didn't even have time to get a plate of tacos and enchiladas!"

Alone in my 57th street apartment. No more friends. Don't care. Don't care about nothing. Don't think about nothing. Pills to smother my thoughts. Smite'n smother. Pills, pills. Promised Dr. Greenson not to. Shame, shame, shame. If this was Los Angeles, would go and see Dr. Greenson. He's serious. Tells me what to do. Marilyn, do it. Marilyn, don't. Used to see a psychiatrist in New York. Who? Can't remember her name. Milton's psychiatrist. Mrs. Hogotohell or summing. Then changed. When did I? Stopped seeing when Milton. Now my New York shrink Marianne Kris. See her every day. Must say Dr. Kris. Prefer Dr. serious Greensonofabitch. Can't talk to her. Pretends to listen. Too polite. Can see she's bored. Says I'm zonked. Her stupid German accent like Nazis in war movies. Her master Dr. Freud. "Herr Freut konziter me his atoptif taughter." Suggests I stay in the hospital. "For you to rest ant pekome stronk akain."

Yeah, in Los Angeles, went to a clinic. Did me good. Joe came visit. Also Marlon Brando. Frank Sinatra. Barely knew him then. Fans sent me flowers, bedroom like a greenhouse. Lost weight even. Yes, I remember, yes. Never been so good-looking, they said.

I, Marilyn

I enter the hospital. Huge white buildings near my apartment, East River. Cornell University – New York Hospital. Sign in as Faye Miller, avoid darn publicity. They take me to a smaller building in a courtyard. Payne Whitney Clinic. Hey what? Doesn't look like the Los Angeles clinic. Iron doors and grates. Loud locks. What kind of a place is this? We're following your doctor's instructions, they say. Please oh please, I want to keep my fur coat! Undress? Why should I? My shoes, I need them, gimme back. Hate this hospital shitty-shirt and slippers. What are you doing to me? Gosh, what kinda bedroom, paddle cell I mean padded... No, no, don't lock, don't! Can't stand locked door, never could. Bars on the window. Glass pane in the door so they can watch me. Toilet in a corner. No TV, no radio, no phone, no flowers, no nothing. They jailed me. Committed no crime, though.

I know oh I know: they locked me into a lunatic asylum like Gladys. Psycho ward. Like my grandma. I ain't crazy! Lemme out! I ain't an orphan! My mother ain't dead! I want out! Open the door! Please please please open the door. Will you open the goddam door or what? I'll be nice, won't make any trouble. I'll talk to Dr. Greenson. I'll get off the pills. Why don't you answer when I call?

They're crazy to lock me up. Dr. Kris tricked me. I hate them. I'll show you. All the journalists in the courtyard. I'll tell them. Can't open the window. Help! Help! They kidnapped Marilyn Monroe!

The journalists seem to be going. Don't go! I need you! They treat me like a nut, so I'll act like one. I played a mad girl once, I remember, *Don't Bother to Knock*... I take off my hospital shirt and I stand naked at the window. The reporters come back! Not bad for my age. Shouldn't be ashamed of your body. If my breasts sag, I'll go see a surgeon and have them raised. In *The Misfits*, I was lying in bed with Clark (oh God he's dead), the wrinkled sheet came short when I moved and one of my breasts popped up. We'll cut the shot, John Huston said, I've already seen breasts. But they kept it for the European version. Hey, you reporters, look at these breasts! Are you really reporters?

The door opens. Two hefty male nurses. What took you so long? Let me out! I ain't crazy... I haven't asked you to lock me up, have I? Hey you, don't touch me! Leave me alone! What's this syringe? Are you a doctor? I don't want a shot... So maybe you think you can put me to sleep with a drop of pap. You must be kidding! Not unless you inject a gallon of barbiturates... They drag me away while I scream and weep and scratch and bite. I'm Marilyn Monroe, you bastards!

They lock me up again, another cell, another courtyard. This time, a separate bathroom, but locked. Hey, hey! I want to go to the bathroom! I throw a chair at the door's window pane

I, Marilyn

to break it. The hefties return and tie my wrists to the side of the bed with leather straps. Can't believe it. Is this the way you treat the number one star in the world?

Next day, two doctors.

"Good morning, miss Monroe. How are you today?"

"What kind of question is this? I'm mad! I mean, I'm mad at you jerks!"

"You're a famous person. Many people dream of being in your place. Why are you so unhappy?"

"Dream of being in my place? Locked up and strapped to their bed? I'd have to be nuts to be happy here and I ain't nuts."

"You aren't indeed. That's what we told the press."

"You talked to the press? I should talk to the press, not you..."

"We told them exhaustion drove a wedge between your mind and reality, as if you had suffered a bout of schizophrenia."

"But that's not true!"

"Of course not. In fact, it is not exhaustion but substance abuse that provoked the bout of schizophrenia."

"You're the biggest bouts of shitophrenia I've ever met! I want out!"

Gee, these doctors are dummies, but I must not lose my composure. The poor women in the other cells yell like beasts in a zoo. I'll keep real quiet, otherwise I'll get nowhere. When the doctors are gone, I play the part of a well-behaved young lady. If the prince of Mighty-Cargo had met me instead of Grace Kelly, would he have married me? Then I would be a princess... Swarms of nurses of both sexes, doctors, secretaries and other hospital personnel come gawk at me through the glass pane in the cell door. I smile, I say Hi in my sweet-child voice. After a while, some guard-in-chief lets me write a letter and give a phone call.

I write to the Strasbergs.

Dear Lee and Paula,

Dr. Kris has had me put into the New York Hospital—pstikiatric division under the care of two idiot doctors. they both should not be my doctors.

You haven't heard from me because Im locked up with all these poor nutty people. I'm sure to end up a nut if I stay in this nightmare. please help me Lee, this is the last place I should be—maybe if you called Dr. Kris and assured her of my sensitivity and that I must get back to class... Lee, I try to remember what you said once in class "that art goes far beyond science"

And the science memories around here I'd like to forget—like screaming women etc.

I, Marilyn

please help me—if Dr. Kris assures you I am all right you can assure her I am not. I do not belong here!

I love you both

Marilyn

P.S. forgive the spelling—and theres nothing to write on here. I'm on the dangerous floor its like a cell. can you imagine—cement blocks they put me in her because they lied to me about calling my doctor and Joe and they had the bathroom door locked so I broke the glass and out side of that I havnt done anything that is uncooperative

I call Joe. He's in Florida, coaching the Yankees during their winter training. He jumps into a plane and comes to my rescue on the fourth day of this torture. As he needs Dr. Kris to give her authorization, he calls her, in the tone of voice he uses when he barks orders to the Yankees.

“You tell'm to let her out or I'll take the damn hospital apart brick by brick!”

What a guy! We leave through the basement to escape the journalists. I hold on tight to my savior's strong arm. He drives me to the other side of town, to the Columbia University—Presbyterian Hospital Medical Center. There I get a private room where I'll be able to rest. This time, I'm in control. I appreciate not only the TV, the radio, the phone and the flowers, but especially the pleasure of receiving visitors. Joe comes every day—the only man I can really trust. Norman Rosten also comes several times. Hadn't seen him in ages.

I check out three weeks later. Six policemen and a dozen strong orderlies keep the pack of fans and journalists at bay. I believe the journalists don't love me anymore because of my affair with Yves Montand. I still send them a kiss.

“I feel wonderful, my friends. Had a nice rest. See you soon!”

I know one thing: Toktor Kris lost her best patient.

I, Marilyn

14 A HOUSE IN BRENTWOOD

Although the whole world adores me, I am alone. I find my New York apartment ghastly. Seems a kind of evil energy radiates from the empty room where Arthur used to work. Can't even dress. Spend the day in night-gown. In winter, I don't sleep naked. Got two blue night-gowns. Sit and stare into emptiness. Eat caviar and hard-boiled eggs while drinking champagne. New secretary, Marjorie Stengel. She worked for Monty Clift. He recommended her to me. Hell, can't find anything for her to do. Nobody writes to me, nobody calls. Pat Newcomb, my new press agent, receives all the mail and phone calls. Who'd write and call here? My friends? Have none.

Now and then, Joe spends a night. Nice to snuggle in his arms, but nothing to say. Outside Joe, Marge and Pat, nobody enters here but the doctors who prescribe the pills.

Staying in the hospital again. They remove my gall bladder. Twas rusty or something, been hurting for a while, pain kept me from falling asleep or woke me middle night. You nervous anxious, surgeon says. Should go live outside city, breathe fresh air, run around, relax.

Press hates me. I read Hollywood gossip section, Clark Gable's wife accuses me for husband's death. Not me. Bad heart. She's jealous, like all of them. Now everybody will believe it. Life would be simpler if I had died like Clark. The hard part is climb on window ledge and jump right away, not hesitate even a second, otherwise people see me on ledge and things get messy, crowd down there shouts and whistles, oh God. When fall from so high, they say you pass out before hitting ground. Close eyes, clench fists, ready to go, be brave Marilyn. But can't jump in night-gown. Also need to make up face and gee my hair roots, can't die with brown hair roots.

I talk to Pat, how tempting to jump and be done with this shit. She talks to the Strasbergs, Norman Rosten too.

"Move back to Hollywood, Marilyn," they say.

I came here to live with Arthur. Not my town. Norman says jumping outta window a New York specialty. Void attracts them. In Los Angeles, people live in low houses.

"Over there," Norman says, "You'll forget this jumping urge at least."

I, Marilyn

I keep my 57th street apartment, though. Be able to return to New York now and then to attend classes at Actors Studio.

Same building I lived in seven or was it eight years ago on Doheny drive, at the border between Beverly Hills and West Hollywood. The name on mailbox and doorbell Marjorie Stengel, my secretary.

Clark Gable's wife invites me for the christening of John Clark, their son. She doesn't complain I killed Cark. This was one more press fib.

When he's not busy in Florida, New York City or San Francisco, Joe comes and spends a few days with me. He's still in love.

I also meet Jack Kennedy (aka The President of the United States) again at his brother-in-law's place. Then one of his friends lends us a house in Palm Springs, where we spend a night together. Can't even know whether I like the man. I do it for the pleasure of realizing what could have been a dream of Norma Jean when she was twelve. Making love to the most powerful man in the world! The secret service guys outside with some kind of gadget to destroy the whole stupid planet. So Grace Kelly seduced the prince of some country that's smaller than our bedroom!

This strong guy has a weak back. Wears braces, is often half-paralyzed, suffers hell, but hides his handicap from the public—when I was a kid Roosevelt same thing.

“If Big Ralph was here,” I tell him, “he would at least reduce the pain.”

“Who's Big Ralph?”

“My special masseur. Wait, I'll see whether I can get him to come here.”

So I call Big Ralph.

“Hi, it's Marilyn. I'm with the President. I tried to give him a lower back massage, but he's still in pain. I told him maybe you could help.”

“Where are you?”

“Palm Springs.”

“I need at least two hours to get there. You don't want to wait that long. Besides, I bet he'd rather get a massage from Marilyn Monroe.”

“That's what he says, too.”

“Tell you what. I'll explain how you should do it exactly...”

So I give the President a massage, following Big Ralph's distant instructions. When it's over, the President grabs the phone.

“Thanks, Big Ralph. I do feel much better.”

I, Marilyn

“You know, you should strengthen your lower back muscles. There are specific exercises. Lying on your back, you bring your knees to your breast...”

He gives him some advice, and also the phone number of a good masseur in Washington.

My steadiest visitor on Doheny drive is both Joe’s and the President’s friend: Frank Sinatra. I go to Las Vegas in June, 1961 for the premiere of his new show. In August, I spend a week-end on his yacht. To attend a gala evening with him, I want to wear a golden low-cut dress that I left in New York City. I call Lena, my Manhattan maid.

“Lena, do you know my gold lamé dress? Fold it carefully, grab a suitcase, jump into the plane and bring it to me.”

“But, miss Monroe, I don’t have enough money to buy a plane ticket.”

“Oh I bought it already. They’ll give it to you when you go to the United Airlines counter in the airport.”

I don’t see Joe or Frank that often. When they’re away, I do nothing all day long except visit Dr. Greenson. Seven days a week, Saturday and Sunday even, I go to his Santa Monica home late afternoon, when he comes back from his city office. After my therapy, which lasts one hour, we drink champagne. I now know his wife Hildi, his daughter Joan and his son Danny. Sometimes I stay for dinner and then I wash dishes with Hildi and Joan. I often go shopping with Joan. I teach her how to make up her lips and eyes. When I feel too low, I spend the night at the Greensons’, like I used to do at the Strasbergs’ in New York City. Dr. Greenson says I need to live in a family. A psychiatrist isn’t supposed to see his patients when they’re off the couch, but I’m a special case.

Dr. Greenson says I’m beginning to control my intake of drugs. We’ve still got to be careful, though. Instead of Nembutal, the barbiturate I gobble in quantities that would kill a horse, he prescribes chloral hydrate.

“This is a straightforward hypnotic. It’s been in use for more than a century. You’ll just sleep and that’s all. But you must stick to the exact dose.”

“How do I know the exact dose?”

“I’ll write it down on the prescription sheet.”

The best thing with Arthur Miller, he counted my pills. I just hate to count. Wonder why. Should ask Dr. Greenson. Because I didn’t have a father? The exact dose. Must stick. Yeah, but how many did I swallow already?

I, Marilyn

The cleaning lady can't wake me up. She calls the emergency medics. They give me oxygen, pump my stomach, the usual shit.

In December, 1961, I tell Dr. Greenson I've lost hope.

"I just have nowhere to go. I won't shoot another movie, that's for sure. I might as well die."

"You know, Marilyn, you don't suffer from full-blown schizophrenia, like your mother, but you've certainly inherited some schizoid tendencies. You shouldn't be left alone. I believe things would go better if you accepted to have a nurse in your house when you're not feeling so great. I mean two nurses: one for the daytime, one at night. They would also check the doses for your pills."

Honest to God I like Dr. Greenson, but I hate his nurses. Where did he find them? I can't stand either one. They try to boss me as if I was a child. Go away! Leave me alone! This is a free country: I'll take as many pills as I want!

I accept to replace the nurses with a kind of housekeeper or governess, Eunice Murray. She's Dr. Greenson's friend. She's sixty. Her face is kind of twisted and she looks like a weasel, but she seems serious and trustworthy to me.

Dr. Greenson's colleague, Dr. Engelberg, delivers my pills. He also injects what he calls "vitamins" into my arm. This reminds me of the "hot shots" which the set doctor gave me when we were shooting *River of No Return* in the Canadian Rockies.

Joe spends Christmas with me, brings a tree, same as last year. We go to the Greensons' for Christmas dinner. Joe doesn't like them. I've become dependent on Dr. Greenson, he says.

"You talk about him all the time. He wants to control you. My patient, the greatest star in the world! If you felt better, he'd lose you, so he prefers you stay sick and depressed. That Mrs. Murray is his spy. You should never have sent Big Ralph away."

Oh yes, Dr. Greenson thought Big Ralph played too important a part in my life, so he asked me to stop seeing him.

"Too many people revolve around you," Dr. Greenson says. "Taking advantage of you. Two Ralphs in your life are one too many, you know."

I always call him Dr. Greenson, but his first name is Ralph, actually.

Following Dr. Greenson's advice, I buy a house in the Spanish colonial style, what they call a hacienda, in Brentwood off San Vicente Boulevard. It's kind of hidden in a dead-end street called Fifth Helena Drive. It looks like Dr. Greenson's house, really, but much smaller. There's a big living-room and several small bedrooms, all on one level. Mrs. Murray says this

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house needs old Mexican furniture. We go to Mexico together to buy stuff. I've never owned a house. Dr. Greenson hopes that being settled in my own home will stabilize my character. I always thought I'd buy a house someday to live there with my husband and children. Buying one alone feels like a failure. Dr. Greenson made me do it.

I like to spend a day now and then at Peter and Pat Lawford's Santa Monica house. The beach and the ocean do not change. One hour or twenty years doesn't make much of a difference to them. Jim Dougherty had vanished to the other side of the world. I would go to Muscle Beach and watch the guys. The sea breeze cooled my skin and seemed to bring vague dreams to me. Something was bound to happen. I expected I'd meet a fairy godmother of some kind. "Do you want to become rich and famous, Norma Jean?" she would ask. Rich and famous! She didn't mention a cost.

I try to play volley-ball at the Lawfords', like I did so long ago, but as soon as I move too much I begin to faint. This is due to the pills I guess. Dr. Greenson says he'll decrease the doses as soon as I feel better.

On February 1st, 1962, I meet Bob Kennedy at the Lawfords'. He is Pat and the President's brother. They're giving a dinner for him. He is stopping over on his way to Japan. He is Attorney General or something. They sit me at his side. He seems as clever as the President, less harsh, also less handsome.

Hollywood rumor says I've become his mistress after that evening. A married man who lives in Washington? I've spent a night with his brother as a gift to poor Norma Jean. What I want, oh I still hope, is a real husband who'll share my house and give me children.

Arthur Miller married a photographer he met on the set of *The Misfits*. I can't blame him, but tears well up in my eyes when I think about it. Even Frank Sinatra talks of marrying some starlet.

15 THE LAST MOVIE

I still owe two movies to Fox. They want me to star in a remake of *My Favorite Wife*, a 1940 Cary Grant comedy. The new film will be called *Something's Got to Give*. Gee, I don't play a ridiculous singer, but a married woman, mother of two children. Due to a misunderstanding, she thinks her husband doesn't want to see her anymore. She flees to the Far East, but her plane goes down in the ocean, so everybody thinks she's dead. She survives, actually, and spends five years on a desert island with another passenger. Then a ship rescues them and she comes back home. Well, what would you expect? Her husband just married another woman. How she conquers him again is what the story is about, of course.

The film is to be directed by George Cukor, like *Let's Make Love*. Dean Martin plays the husband, Cyd Charisse his new wife, Tom Tryon the desert island companion. We begin shooting in April, 1962. I haven't seen a camera for one year. I'm scared. I've always been scared in front of a camera, anyway. Its power is awesome. I love it and I fear it.

First time I play a mother! Dancer's flashy make-up and clinging dresses won't do. I need to create a sober and serious look. Now that Grace Kelly is gone, maybe I should try to replace her... Sometimes I feel I've had enough of Marilyn Monroe. Such a pain in the neck to turn into her every morning. The sunglasses and wig I must wear to walk in the street. Can't visit Japan or France like other people. Is there a country where I could walk around without being bothered? Burma? Even my close friends mistake me for Marilyn Monroe. Bet I'd be happier if I became Norma Jean again.

George Cukor doesn't like me I know. Shooting *Let's Make Love* was tough. He despises me. Despises all women actually. He's a megalomaniac and maybe a maniac. He orders a full size copy of his Sunset Boulevard home built on the set, down to the very bushes of his garden. Who ever heard of such an outrageous idea? If a bush seems a teeny bit off-color to Mr. Cukor, he asks the painters to work on it some more. I hate this house. It's as twisted and convoluted as Mr. Cukor's mind, full of nooks and crannies where they hide lights and cameras. I often wonder where the light is coming from. I even look for the camera.

For some strange reason, what was funny in 1940 often falls flat twenty years later. Actually the story is based on an old Tennyson poem, *Enoch Arden*, which is about as funny

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as a funeral. A first fellow works on the script, then a second one. Now they bring in Nunnally Johnson, who wrote two of my movies: *We're not Married* in 1952 and *How to Marry a Millionaire* in 1953. I talk a lot with him so he'll polish my lines until I feel comfortable with them. But then he goes to England. George Cukor replaces him with a set writer and begins to change the whole bloody dialog. He wants to humiliate me by forcing stupid lines on me. The man was considered a good director in the thirties, but now he's an old cranky fellow who hasn't made a good movie in years. Oh God, I can't stand it. I'm so tired! Despite Whitey Snyder's genius, getting Marilyn Monroe to look like herself takes longer every day.

Fox has new bosses: fools, businessmen, accountants who know nothing about the movies. They're wasting millions to shoot the most expensive and boring film in history, *Cleopatra*. I was willing to play the part, but they gave it to Liz Taylor. She gets two million dollars, plus ten percent of the gross. People criticized me when I brought twenty-seven suitcases to London, but she sent one hundred and fifty to Italy. Where are my favorite cameramen and the light wizards who know how to give me really luscious skin? In Rome, on the set of *Cleopatra*. Fox is investing so much dough that's it's on the brink of bankruptcy, that's what people say. They're selling their big Los Angeles lot to cover *Cleopatra*'s budget overruns. *Something's Got to Give* is the last film to be shot here, then the place will be torn down.

While I'm only getting the 100,000 dollars of my salary, Dean Martin will receive three times more. I've heard that my movies have earned Fox sixty million dollars so far. I'm their most productive employee! Gee if this new film is a hit, I can save the whole doomed Studio from going under. This doesn't prevent them from threatening me because I may be a few hours late now and then. They check my comings and goings. When I pass the Studio's gate in the morning, I see that the guard jots down the exact hour. To escape this foolish snooping, I get off the limousine and enter via a backdoor.

Friends tell me Liz is late as often as me. Or more often, some say. They have to suspend *Cleopatra*'s shooting all the time for some silly reason or other. She falls in love with Richard Burton, her partner, it's on the newspapers' front page day after day. They have to stop shooting for three full weeks: Richard Burton has beaten her so bad while drunk that her face looks like mashed potatoes.

They say I'm temperamental, undependable, unreliable and what else. Okay, so I asked that Cyd Charisse's hair should be darker than mine. A simple and sensible request. Since people come to see a Marilyn Monroe movie, my hair should be the only one that attracts attention. George Cukor is so perverse that he hides a blonde within the crowd of extras in a

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street scene. He knows there's never any blonde in my movies except me. I have her sent away immediately, of course. If they go on being nasty, I'll turn nasty too. I'll rub peanut butter into my hair, then the hairdresser will need one more hour to untangle them!

I'm sick anyway. I mean, for real. I caught a virus in Mexico or somewhere. I've got fever. I throw up as soon as I try to eat. My temperature hovers between 100 and 101. According to my contract, I can go home when it reaches 103. George Cukor sees I can hardly stand on my feet, so he shoots every little scene thirty times. This guy is a sadistic moron I say. I bet he wants to sabotage the shooting. From the very start, he said he didn't want to make that film.

All the Fox people despise me because they remember me as a gin rummy girl earning a hundred dollars a week. They watch the shooting on the sly. I know they're lurking in the dark corners of the house. They hope to see me stumble and fall.

When I come back home, my dog is supposed to lick my chin, which proves he recognizes me. Cukor shoots and reshoots the dog scene for more than three hours. I asked them to name the dog in the story Tippy, which was the name of a dog I owned as a kid, but his real name outside the movie business is Jeff. He is a funny but very stubborn cocker spaniel. He doesn't lick my chin even once. I whisper: "Come, Jeff, come and kiss me! Come on, Jeff!" We're in a sound stage. Huge floodlights are supposed to simulate the warm sun of California. Hot is more like it. Poor Jeff's tongue hangs like a piece of red cloth and my make-up is beginning to melt. Everybody says we should change the dog, but Cukor insists: "Once more!" Meanwhile, I'm kneeling and fondling Jeff. The set doctor gives me a hot shot so I can hold on. I laugh actually when I see how the poor mutt tries to please us by leaping and dancing and doing all kinds of antics except what's written on the script. At the end of the day, he seems to feel fine but I'm utterly exhausted.

So then on the following days either my fever keeps me in bed or I give up going to the Studio because I'm more than eight hours late.

What hurts me more than anything is that Dr. Greenson is gone to Europe on vacation. He's been taking care of me seven days a week for more than a year. Lately, our sessions lasted up to four or five hours. He deserves a break, anyway. His wife wants to visit her old sick mother in Switzerland, too. He did forsake me, though. He tells me what to do. How will I know?

He ain't looking over my shoulder? Great! I send away the awful witch, Mrs. Murray. She was supposed to spy on me, obviously. As if this wasn't enough, she pretended to decide everything in the house. When some friends came to visit me, she told them I had gone to a

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production meeting, although I was there, resting in my bedroom. She gave me orders and treated me like a child.

The Fox people refuse to believe I'm sick. They pretend my whims (which is what they call my illnesses, although several doctors confirm they're real) have cost them one million dollars already. They stopped shooting *Cleopatra* for five months when Liz was ill, but I'm not allowed to stay home and rest for a few days.

Go to hell with your million dollars! Get Liz Taylor to replace me if you want. On May 17, I fly to New York. I have an appointment. I told the Studio about it more than one month ago. At the last minute, they try to prevent me from going. Are you kidding? I mean, good publicity for me will benefit the film, won't it? Or maybe you hate me so much that you don't care about benefits... Pete Lawford wants me to surprise the President—he's attending a great gala bash in the Madison Square Garden on May 19 to celebrate his forty-fifth birthday. Fifteen thousand wealthy Democratic Party donors will be there, some of them are paying one thousand dollars I'm told. Maria Callas, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee and other celebrities will perform. To crown the evening, I'll sing *Happy Birthday to You!*

I've asked Jean-Louis, who makes my outfits for the movie, to create a special dress for me.

"I'd like to wear just diamonds and pearls, so I really shine in the light like a star."

"You can pay one billion dollars, perhaps, miss Monroe?"

"What about five thousand dollars?"

"Then I sink I use fake diamonds, rhinestones zey're called."

The stones, six thousand of them, are embroidered in a kind of transparent body stocking. They seem to be glued onto my naked body.

I've rehearsed singing *Happy Birthday to you* for weeks. I want it to sound as sexy as possible. When Dr. Greenson went away, he told me his children would take care of me. Joan his daughter says I sing quite well. Danny his son writes some political jokes I can use after singing.

Maria Callas sings first.

"And now," Pete Crawford says, "on this occasion of your birthday, Mr. President, Marilyn Monroe!"

Everybody cheers and applauds and whistles, but no Marilyn Monroe enters the stage. I'm not supposed to and anyway the hairdresser is still working on my head. Gosh, I hope I won't stammer or make a mistake... I drink a few glasses of champagne to relax and feel stronger.

I, Marilyn

Ella Fitzgerald sings.

“And now,” Pete Crawford says, “a woman who needs no introduction: Marilyn Monroe!”

The drums roll, the crowd roars and howls, but the stage stays empty. Then, after Peggy Lee:

“Mr. President, perhaps there has been no other female in the history of show business who has meant so much, who has done more... Mr. President, the late Marilyn Monroe!”

Pete’s assistant, Milton, helps me onstage. Even if I wasn’t gee slightly drunk, I couldn’t walk by myself because the dress is sooo damn tight... I can hardly breathe, really, so when I sing or should I say whisper *Happy Birthday, Mr. President* I sound out of breath sort of, which makes it even sexier... The people seem truly happy and this includes the President of course so then I shout:

“Everybody—sing!”

While the whole crowd sings and laughs, two chefs bring a huge birthday cake with forty-five candles. Later, the President adds a few words for me to his big speech:

“Miss Monroe left a picture to come all the way East... I can now retire from politics after having had *Happy Birthday* sung to me in such a sweet, wholesome way.”

After the gala, I drink more champagne in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bigwig or whoever. How did I get here? Guy drove a car. Sat in the back with my escort, Mr. Miller, Isadore his first name. So many people here, be careful Isadore why don’t you sit down. Jack, I mean Mr. President, surrounded by a throng of admirers, still remembers poor Marilyn and talks to me.

“Mr. President, I’d like you to meet my former father-in-law...”

I think I’m quite very happy but I ain’t so sure cause a mist inside my brain and outside too, can’t see whether my happiness is for real. Love this mist. Love to swallow pills and drink champagne—make it thicker, protect me from ugly reality.

Home. Edgy, pins and needles. I call Rupert Allan in Monte Carlo. Often call him when I can’t sleep cause middle of the night here, over there in Europe already morning I don’t wake him up. Then call Big Ralph, lives in New York since Dr. Greenson sacked him. Him I wake up but he’s used to it and comes right away gives me massage.

“Gosh, that was just divine. Are you very busy here, Ralph?”

“Well...”

“How about flying back with me this afternoon? I’ll buy the ticket.”

“I thought your shrink... My bad influence...”

I, Marilyn

“Joe says the only bad influence is Dr. Greenson’s. He let me down, actually, so I’ve decided not to obey him anymore. He wanted his spy, Mrs. Murray, to replace all my friends, but I got rid of her. She didn’t massage me, anyway, that’s why I need you.”

I thought I had gotten rid of her... When I reach my Brentwood home, who opens the door? Murray the witch! She welcomes me as if I hadn’t dismissed her. I try to shout at her, I never ever want to see you again, didn’t you understand, but I discover oh a strange thing, I’m more hungry than angry, my stomach takes control over my brain when I smell a fragrant mixture of herbs and spice, she bought stuff and cooked a warm soup, gee I’ll kick her out tomorrow.

But then she brings me a joyful colorful sweet fruit salad as soon as I wake up in the morning and I don’t dare send her away.

The Fox people have seen me on TV, who hasn’t, *Happy Birthday Mr. President*, and they’re mad at me for no reason at all. I mean, I come to the set on time, ready to work, while Dean Martin my partner stays home with a cold. They don’t blame him. Nobody says he’s temperamental or what.

I shoot my big reunion scene. I meet my children, who grew up while I was believed to be dead. They don’t know I’m their mother: I pretend to be a Swedish governess. I’m troubled of course when I see them after five years. Although it would feel oh so good to cry, I must not—otherwise they would wonder why and find me strange. Everybody says I play it beautifully and my Swedish accent (I practiced a lot with Paula) is perfect. I’ve been an actress for fifteen years, I study with the best teachers, so I hope my skills are improving, but playing the mother’s emotions is pretty easy. All I have to do is think about the children I never had, nor will ever have I fear. Real tears are welling inside me, gee what a life.

Next day Dean Martin still not there, let’s play my big sexy swimming-pool scene. I’m taking a midnight swim, I love to swim after spending five years in Hawaii, I’m trying to seduce and provoke my husband too. Hey, darling, are you looking? I romp and splash, he’ll come to the window, he’s in his bedroom upstairs with his stupid new wife.

I’m wearing a flesh-colored bikini so I’ll seem to be naked.

“Can see a strap,” the cameraman says.

“I’ll take it off,” I tell George Cukor. “If I’m naked, the midnight swim will feel more real.”

“Okay. As long as you’re swimming, it shouldn’t make any difference. Then we’ll have a long shot when you come out and put on your bathrobe.”

I, Marilyn

“A long shot is fine for the film, but we could also ask a set photographer to come closer, so we would have some nice pictures for the magazines. Think of the publicity for the movie!”

“What a great idea, Marilyn! Great!”

He asks all the bystanders to leave the set, there are always so many people who have nothing to do there. I go to my dressing-room, remove the bikini and come back with my bathrobe on.

Someone shouts:

“Hey, Bobby, can you give me some more light up there?”

I laugh.

“I hope Bobby is a girl!”

I slip out of the bathrobe and into the water. Cukor shoots what he needs. Then, when I step out of the pool, three guys are waiting for me with their cameras. Beside Jimmy Mitchell, the regular set photographer, the production has summoned Larry Schiller and Bill Woodfield, whom I have already seen around. They’re working on feature articles about the shooting of *Something’s Got to Give* for French magazine Paris Match and some press agency. They gawk at me with saucer-sized eyes when they discover I’m just wearing a few drops of water. They recover their spirits soon enough and begin shooting like maniacs. Enjoy, my friends. This doesn’t happen every day!

Gosh, I ain’t ashamed of my body. Let the whole world admire me! Let Liz Taylor show her naked body if she wants to compare to Marilyn! Big Ralph says I look good, with firm muscles and a nice tone of skin. I’m following Dr. Greenson’s advice and sticking to one kind of pill.

Larry Schiller brings me the pictures as soon as they’ve been developed. Wow! I knew it: Marilyn Monroe is still gorgeous! These pictures are worth a fortune.

“You tell me which ones you want destroyed, miss Monroe.”

“Oh, they’re all fine. Except maybe this one. I look kind of silly, I think... And this one, with the, er...”

“Pubic hair.”

“Yeah. You can keep it, but don’t sell it to Playboy, okay?”

Larry and Bill go into a partnership. They convince Fox to destroy Jimmy Mitchell’s films, as the official promotion campaign can’t use such pictures. They give Jimmy ten thousand dollars as compensation.

I, Marilyn

Larry's agent needs less than twenty-four hours to sell the photographs in thirty-two countries.

"All the magazines will publish them on the same day," Larry tells me. "In one month. We'll earn more than one hundred thousand dollars each. We owe this to you, of course. Tell me what we can give you in exchange..."

"Just give me a projector so I can look at the slides."

"A projector? While I'll be able to buy a house?"

"At least I'm making your wife happy. I'll be happy, too, to see all those magazine covers with me on them instead of Liz! Say, Larry, I hope I'm not making a big mistake by sending these pictures out. What do you think?"

"You're already famous, miss Monroe. Now you can make me famous."

On Friday, June 1st, we shoot a funny scene. While buying some shoes, I try to enroll the salesman into a crazy scheme. He is a short very shy guy with thick glasses, played by Wally Cox—whom I've known for quite a while, as he's Marlon Brando's childhood buddy from Detroit.

"Excuse me, sir, I need some help..."

"Help? Of course, miss. Do you want the shoes delivered someplace?"

"No, not that kind of help. Let's have lunch together, right? I'll explain everything..."

"Lunch, miss?"

"Then, after work, you'd come home with me..."

"Home with you? Oh oh..."

"I want you to meet my husband."

"You have a husband?"

"Yes, but he's married to another woman."

"Your husband is married to another woman, right?"

"You'll tell him you spent five years with me on a desert island..."

I think I play the scene rather well. The crew seems to agree and applauds at the end. Then I bring the shoe salesman to my husband, who sees through the ploy because the real stranded fellow has already called on him, I mean he asked for me and so on. What makes it funny is the contrast between tiny Wally and hunky Tom Tryon, who's about seven feet tall. Also, my husband plays cat and mouse with the poor shoe guy. He queries him about the island, the palms trees, the tropical fish, and enjoys the silly improvised answers.

I, Marilyn

June 1st is my birthday, of course. I'm thirty-six today. They bring a cake, doesn't compare to President Kennedy's but nice enough. Wally sings *Happy Birthday, miss Monroe* in a hilarious imitation of my New York performance. What a guy! I laugh and cry at the same time. All those pent-up tears want to flow. I feel oh so foolish...

I spend the evening at Dodger Stadium. I've promised Joe (who's in Europe somewhere) to attend a fund-raising game for the Lou Gehrig charity. I bring Dean Martin's son with me. He's so happy to sit in the VIP booth with Marilyn Monroe! They ask me to throw the first ball. Despite my high heels, my tight skirt, the champagne I drank at my birthday party, I throw towards the batter well more or less. Remember Norma Jean, who played softball in the orphanage. Joe would be proud of me I bet.

Back home Danny and Joan Greenson come and offer me a champagne glass with my name engraved inside.

"Now I'll know who I am when I'm drinking," I tell them.

They're sweet, but I miss their father. He's gone three weeks already. Thirty-six years. She was an orphan, but she was happy playing softball. Couldn't imagine she would become the most famous star in the world. But so unhappy... Thirty-six. No husband no kids. Alone... If I could speak to Dr. Greenson, he would cheer me up. Frank Sinatra in Monte Carlo with that slut Grace.

Night was cold, caught a darn virus in the Stadium. Set doctor comes on Monday morning examines me. Can stay home, he says.

Pills help me forget. Stick to one kind. Promised Dr. Greenson. When is he coming back? Back already? What day is this? Saturday I think. Gosh, forgot to call him.

"Hello, am I talking to, er... Hello? Greenson? This is Marilyn. Doctor? Who are you? Who? Danny? I don't know any Danny."

Dr. Greenson's kids come see me. Don't even remember their names. Manny? Jean? I'm naked. Not ashamed of my body.

"How do I look? Tell me you love me, Manny. Everybody loves me. Poor and rich love me, short and tall, fat and skinny. Even the President of the United States of America Jack something. Everybody except me. I hate her. The only person doesn't love Marilyn Monroe: herself! So ugly... A wreck. Nobody loves me. They pick me up, then throw me away. An old bag full of rubbish. Worthless... A woman with no kids is worthless... Gimme a reason, just one reason..."

"A reason?"

I, Marilyn

“A reason to go on living. What for? Tell me what for?”

“You make movies that bring joy to the whole world, Marilyn.”

“Tis over. Thirty-six. Too old. Greta Garbo stopped thirty-six. Let them take Liz. Why go to the Studio? One more stupid movie. They want to earn money by selling my ass. I shit on you.”

They phone their father in Europe. He shortens his vacations and comes back on Wednesday, June 6. He calls Henry Weinstein, the film’s producer, to promise I’ll be there next Monday.

“I’m bringing you bad news, Marilyn. Henry says they have dismissed you from the picture yesterday. As Dean Martin refused to go on without you, they’ve decided to shut down the film.”

“You mean good news. Fug their lousy movie. What do I care? I’ll die and they’ll be real sorry.”

They lost their marbles. Sack me for just three days at home doctor says I got virus in sinus. As if I had never done it before. The movie always gets made in the end and earns millions.

Fox’s new boss, Levathes, a former advertising suit who knows nothing about movies, tells the press that the stars are destroying Hollywood.

“We’ve let the inmates run the asylum and they’ve nearly torn it down.”

Pat Newcomb says they wrote a special contract for Liz Taylor. Although she is pushing Fox over the cliff, they can’t get rid of her.

“You’re the only one they can fire. By doing it, they prove that the stars are not running the asylum. Besides, stopping *Something’s Got to Give* saves lots of money”

“So I’m doing them a favor by being late and staying home...”

“You must answer, Marilyn. Send a press release to the papers. Tell them what’s wrong with Hollywood: all these clueless bosses looking into crystal balls to take idiotic decisions.”

“Yeah, they’d better think twice before killing the golden goose.”

They say I owe them half a million dollars for breach of contract. They claim I wasn’t sick, but enjoying the good life in Hollywood’s nightclubs. Fox’s public relation people, who were my close friends and worked hard at launching my career ten years ago, go around spreading the craziest rumors: that I’m nuts, that I spent hours naked in my dressing-room while the crew waited for me on the set, that I ain’t professional, that I asked for dialog changes all the time, that I couldn’t remember more than three words and so on. George Cukor doesn’t need any prodding to add his venom:

I, Marilyn

“She lost her mind,” he tells a journalist. “None of the takes we shot for *Something’s Got to Give* is worth anything. She’s so doped that she can hardly stand on her feet. Her career is over.”

They pretend that the crew technicians are mad at me because I’m depriving them of their salary, but I’ve talked to the guys and I know they support me. They’d rather get rid of George Cukor.

The Studio wants to replace me with Lee Remick. Jean-Louis has already measured her so he can adjust the costumes.

Dean Martin says he wants me and nobody but me.

“Look, in the film I’m not leaving Cyd Charisse for some other woman, but for Marilyn Monroe. Who else?”

They think he’s rejecting Lee Remick, so they offer the part to Kim Novak, Shirley MacLaine, Doris Day, who refuse because they know the Studio treated me wrong. You can’t fool good actresses like these. Dean Martin just walks away. Fox sues him for three million dollars, saying that’s what they spent so far.

Meanwhile, Fox’s board members are getting angry at Levathes and the other big guys:

“You’ve fired our greatest star! Just when these sexy swimming-pool pictures are all over the place and the public is eager to see the finished movie.”

They’ll soon beg me to come back, my lawyer says.

Okay, but hearing all these slanders and lies about me is very upsetting. The bastards display my private life in public. They describe my grandmother’s and my mother’s mental troubles, as if to imply they’re hereditary. I’ve always been afraid of turning crazy can’t deny that. Dr. Greenson helps me stay sane. If I really become nuts, Fox will be responsible.

What comforts me some is to see my face on all the magazine covers. The nude pictures and the clash with Fox put me in the spotlight, so Life, Vogue and Cosmopolitan want to interview and photograph me.

“How does it feel to be thirty-six?” the Cosmo girl asks me.

“As long as sixteen-year old boys whistle when they see me, I don’t feel I’m getting old.”

Vogue’s photographer, Bert Stern, shoots a series of magnificent photographs in which I wear an evening dress, a fur coat, or nothing except a veil or a scarf.

“You’re a mystery, Marilyn,” he says. “Something like a goddess, everyman’s dream.”

The Life reporter, Dick Meryman, comes several times to my home. I kind of like him and trust him (as he is “religion editor” at the magazine), so I open my heart to him.

I, Marilyn

“This industry should behave like a mother whose child has just run in front of a car. But, instead of clasping the child to them, they start punishing the child. Like you don’t dare get a cold—how dare you get a cold or a virus! Executives can get colds and stay home and phone in, but the actor? I wish they had to act a comedy with a temperature and a virus infection! I’m there to give a performance, not to be disciplined by a studio. This isn’t supposed to be a military school, after all... It might be kind of a relief to be finished with movie-making. That kind of work is like a hundred-yard dash and then you’re at the finish line and you sigh and say you’ve made it, but you never have. There’s another scene and another film and you have to start all over again.”

“You don’t like the Studio, do you?”

“I don’t work for the Studio, but for the people who go see my movies. I’ve always felt that even in the slightest scene they ought to get their money’s worth. This is an obligation of mine, to give them the best. I do have feelings some days when there are some scenes with a lot of responsibility towards the meaning and I’ll wish, gee if only I could have been a cleaning woman...”

“Maybe cleaning women would prefer to be Marilyn Monroe.”

“Fame can be a burden. It brings you partial happiness, it doesn’t fulfill you. It warms you a bit, but the warming is only temporary. When you’re famous every weakness is exaggerated. Fame will go by and... So long, fame, I’ve had you! I’ve always known it was fickle. It was something I experienced, but it’s not where I live. It’s nice to be included in people’s fantasies, but you also like to be accepted for your own sake.”

“You resent being a sex symbol?”

“A sex symbol becomes a thing and I just hate to be a thing. I don’t look on myself as a commodity, but I’m sure a lot of people have, including one corporation in particular which shall remain nameless. I don’t mind being burdened with being glamorous and sexual, though. We are all born sexual creatures, thank God, but it’s a pity so many people despise and crush this natural gift. Art, real art, comes from it—everything. The Studio people don’t understand me, but ordinary people do. Workers, young people, old folks. My two husbands, Mr. DiMaggio and Mr. Miller, had children and I got along fine with them. They brought me great satisfactions. Did you see my garden? I planted the flowers myself. You can take a dip in the pool, if you want.”

“Never while I’m on duty.”

“I now live in my work and in a few relationships with the few people I can really count on. I am born a gemini.”

I, Marilyn

“You mean you have a double personality, like Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde?”

“More than double. I am so many people at the same time. It upsets me sometimes. I’d rather be just me.”

“Who’s always late, Jekyll or Hyde?”

“I don’t want to be late, but I usually am, much to my regret. Often, I’m late because I’m preparing a scene, maybe preparing too much sometimes. When the people go to see me and look up at the screen, they don’t know I was late. And by that time, the Studio has forgotten all about it and making money. Oh, well.”

Lee and Paula Strasberg, shocked by the disgraceful way Fox treats me, invite me to work with them in New York. They think I could begin a serious career in the theater. So now I live in my 57th street apartment again.

I rehearse a play by Colette, a French writer. Lee, Paula and the students applaud me.

Theater? Every evening? And how would I remember my lines?

Back in my empty apartment. Lair of loneliness. Take off my too-tight dress. If only I could also tear off my skin! Too-tight skin. It burns... Jump out of my skin!

Must talk to Dr. Greenson. No, must see. I get my suitcases and fly back to L.A.

My life as a woman a failure. My own men mistake me for the wonderful picture they see on the screen. Gee I ain’t the picture, but only its author. Sex symbol. Never be as tall as that picture. They expect bells whistles and fireworks, but my body the same as any woman’s. Ain’t a dream, just a real gal.

The only one does respect me, not consider me a toy, simple human man, Joe DiMaggio.

Pete and Pat Lawford drive me to California-Nevada border. Frank Sinatra opens huge hotel-casino. Invited all his friends. Dean Martin.

“Thanks, Dean, for what you did.”

“What did I do?”

“Lee Remick. You refused to go on and shoot the movie with her.”

“My contract allowed me to approve or reject the leading lady. The script was rather weak, but your presence saved the film. Without you, the whole thing stank. I told them to sack Cukor.”

Joe there too. I throw myself into his arms... Strongest arms in the world. Only man loves me without ulterior motive. My support. Savior. Companion.

I, Marilyn

My lawyer was right: Fox crawls at my feet. The press on my side, the public even more. On July 25, the Studio boss, Mr. Levathes, comes to my home in person to pay amends and rehire me. Gosh, I wake up early. My hairdresser washes and styles my hair, Whitey Snyder makes me up right.

“No one wants bad blood,” Mr. Levathes says. “We’re ready to start shooting on September 4. We improved the script, actually. We’ll replace Cukor with Negulesco, if you want. Oh yeah: we’ve raised your salary to 250,000 dollars.”

“Negulesco? Sure... I’ll want to see the new script.”

“Of course, of course. One month should be enough, as we’ve shot more than half of it. Then we have a musical, *I Love Luisa*. This would allow you to complete your four-movie contract.”

What a victory! I’m delighted. *I Love Luisa* tells the story of a woman who marries four times, as her husband always dies a few days after the wedding. Gene Kelly, Dean Martin, Paul Newman and Frank Sinatra will play the unfortunate grooms.

The Studio needs someone to blame for the mess they got themselves into. Let’s fire Paula Strasberg, they say. Poor Paula! Nobody likes her. Arthur Miller used to say she replaced my mother and was as crazy as her. Whitey Snyder says she prevents me from standing on my own two legs. Well it’s true the shooting of *The Prince and the Showgirl* went on very smoothly without her. Dr. Greenson also says I depend too much on her. According to him, I depend too much on everybody: Big Ralph, Pat Newcomb, even Whitey Snyder. Everybody but him. How could I part from them? They’ve been at my side for years, like a family. I’d better find another doctor. He wants me to be his thing. He’s jealous of my friends. He forbade me to play in the movie John Huston is preparing about Dr. Freud. Some famous French writer is working on the script. Freud’s daughter doesn’t want a film to be made about her father, Dr. Greenson says.

Yeah, I’ll put some order in my house. Spring cleaning. Bye bye, Paula. Bye bye, Dr. Greenson. And first of all: bye bye, Mrs. Murray! The damn bitch, I mean witch, gee I’ve discovered she opens and reads my mail, under orders from her master I guess.

On Wednesday, August 1st, she tells me she is going on vacation.

“I’m flying to Europe with my sister next Monday. Unless you need me, Marilyn. I haven’t bought my tickets yet.”

“No, it’s okay. Let me write the check for August in advance. You know, Mrs. Murray, I’ll travel too. Go East, I think. Live with Joe. So, anyway, you don’t have to come back here in September.”

I, Marilyn

There!

On August 2nd, I celebrate my new birth with Whitey Snyder and Marge Plecher, who's in charge of my movie wardrobe and dresses me on the set.

"We're on, my friends. I've talked to Mr. Negulesco. I told him he wouldn't recognize me: from now on, Marilyn Monroe will be on time! And now, I'll tell you the most fantastic news. Joe and I are marrying again next week! Jean-Louis is already making a dress."

"This is really great... But you know what? This will sound very corny... We wanted to tell you... We're marrying too!"

"Whitey and Marge? Wow!"

On Friday, August 3rd, I tell Dr. Greenson I want to stop my therapy. He pretended he'd wean me from the pills, but the only difference is he prescribes them himself as a way to control me. Or he asks his stooge Dr. Engelberg to give me the pills. These so-called vitamins Dr. Engelberg injects me are just more of the same.

Dr. Greenson doesn't seem too happy to learn that Marilyn Monroe is leaving him. Blood rushes to his face. He looks like a bad guy in a movie all of a sudden with twisted distorted features ready to spit fire. The man has got a violent temper often shouts at me came close to hitting me once.

"You tend to attract people harmful to you, Marilyn, because your subconscious mind tries to reproduce unpleasant situations you've known as a child."

"Sure. All the people around me are harmful and I must send them away. Except you, of course."

"You're very sick. You can stop the therapy, but you're taking a risk. A terrible risk. Don't say I haven't warned you!"

I call Norman Rosten in New York.

"Did you read my interview in Life magazine? What do you think about it?"

"You said the right things. I think people didn't expect such stuff. The dumb blonde isn't so stupid after all!"

"I've got lots of projects. After I finish *Something's Got to Give*, I'll shoot *I Love Luisa*, a musical, which will be my last for Fox. With Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Paul Newman and

I, Marilyn

Gene Kelly. Greatest guys in town! The director will be J. Lee Thompson¹. I'm meeting him on Monday at 5 PM. Then I'll shoot a life of Jean Harlow. I've always admired her, of course. And also maybe *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. You know what I'm doing next week? Marrying Joe yet again. I'll give a big party here in Hollywood then I'll fly to New York... Lee and Paula bought seats for some Broadway play. Will you come to the theater with us? I want to have fun. Let's enjoy life before we're decrepit oldsters."

"Are you okay, Marilyn? You sound strange."

"I feel nervous. These doctors keep injecting funny stuff into me and feeding me loads of pills. At least, when I'm in New York, I won't see them anymore.

Dr. Greenson won't let go. Comes to my home and stays hours.

"I put my own life aside the better to take care of you, Marilyn. You're showing your gratitude in a strange manner."

He's planning some trick, I bet. Wants to keep me under his influence. I'm scared. When he's gone, I ask Pat Newcomb to spend the night with me here. Mrs. Murray is at her sister's preparing her suitcase. While I stay awake turn toss worry, Pat sleeps like newborn lamb until late morning. Gee people just take it easy. I feel awful bloated giddy. Merry-go-round and round can't stop. Something wrong with my head.

Today Saturday, August 4. Mrs. Murray comes in 8 AM. The witch's last day. Big Ralph calls.

"Hey, Ralph! Did I tell you about my wedding? Who? Why don't you come and have dinner with me tomorrow night, then I'll tell you who!"

I order hors d'œuvre, drinks and flowers for my big party next week. Lunch with Pat.

Greenson again after lunch. In my bedroom.

"Your therapy is well advanced, Marilyn. All the pieces are coming into place. Until we apply the final soldering that will guarantee a sturdy stable structure, there is a great tension. If we stop now, your personality will blow apart, shatter into a thousand fragments. This is what happened to your mother already."

"I have a half-sister, Berneice Something. She's okay. If the Studio hadn't given me all these hot shots and pills years ago and also treated me like shit, I would be okay too."

¹ J. Lee Thompson did shoot the film in 1963 (for a 1964 release) with Shirley McLaine—and Robert Mitchum instead of Frank Sinatra. The title was changed to *What a Way to Go*.

I, Marilyn

“I worked so hard to help you. My whole family participated. This is a failure not only for me, but also for them. They’re terribly disappointed.”

He’s lucky to have children. Why does he drag them into this mess? I begin to cry. Weak helpless hopeless worthless. He tells Pat he’s taking care of me and she’d better go home. He calls Mrs. Murray.

“Marilyn is very tense. I’d like you to drive her to the beach. She’ll walk a little and relax.”

In my bedroom get sunglasses. My mind shatter. Just a few red pills prop me up. Dr. Engelberg prescribed.

She drives to the Lawfords’ house. Guests. Nobody I know. They speak too fast don’t understand a word. Gee feel underwater. Walk on beach. Quicksand can’t stand will swallow my feet. Why do they play volleyball? Throw ball up always comes down stupid. Wanna go home.

Empty house. Someone comes in five minutes. Who? Oh, Dr. Greenson. Phone call: Pete Lawford.

“Marilyn? You went through like lightning. We hardly saw you. We’re having our Saturday night Mexican dinner, you know. Why don’t you come, say around seven?”

“Oh, thanks. I don’t think... I can’t. Thanks...”

“Come on! I promise you’ll be able to go home early. I’ll call you later in case you change your mind.”

Phone rings again and again. Who is it? Mrs. Murray answers or Dr. Greenson. Marilyn not here they say. Dinner time Dr. Greenson leaves. Asks witch to spend night. Long last day. Tomorrow be gone.

If only Joe was here! Flies in from New York Sunday night or is it Monday. I’ll write letter to him.

Dear Joe

If I can only succeed in making you happy, I will have succeeded in the biggest and most difficult thing there is—that is, to make one person completely happy. Your happiness means my happiness, and

Yes, but if I send tomorrow morning... No, Sunday no mail. If I send Monday, won’t be in New York be here. Never part anymore. Never need write to him.

Phone rings. Joe?

“Hello, miss Monroe, this is Jose...”

“Who?”

I, Marilyn

“Jose Bolanos. We met in Mexico City, when you bought some furniture there. You remember?”

“Don’t know... Tired... Too tired... Some other time.”

I try to call Big Ralph. No answer. Phone rings again.

“We’re serving the fajitas, Marilyn. Please come! I’m sure you’ll enjoy... Marilyn? Marilyn?”

“Oh... Dunno... I... Oh...”

“Hello? Marilyn? Are you okay?”

“Pete, say goodbye to Pat... Say goodbye to the President... Say goodbye to yourself, cause you’re nice guy...”

“Marilyn? Marilyn?”

“I’ll see... I’ll see...”

How many pills? Did I take yellow or red? Must not mix. Couldn’t take red, cause red bottle empty. Means I’m taking yellow. Not so many yet bottle nearly full.

Or maybe too many. Sleepy oh so sleepy. They’ll wake me up. Otherwise what the heck.

CONCLUSION

Marilyn Monroe died on Saturday, August 4, 1962. The exact hour of her death is unknown—maybe between 9 and 10 PM.

Joe DiMaggio organized the funeral, which took place on August 8, the very day they were supposed to marry again. He spent the night near the body. Whitey Snyder made her up for the last time.

Joe considered Hollywood had killed Marilyn, so he decided there would be no producers, directors, executives or stars at the funeral, but only close friends: Big Ralph, Pat Newcomb, the Strasbergs, the Greenson family, thirty people altogether. Marilyn's half-sister, Berneice Miracle, came from Florida. Until 1982, Joe had red roses delivered once a week to her tomb in the Westwood cemetery. William Powell had done this for Jean Harlow and Joe had promised Marilyn he'd do it too. Nobody knows why he stopped after twenty years.

Who killed Marilyn Monroe?

Dr. Noguchi, who got his fifteen minutes of fame as “the stars’ coroner,” wrote the autopsy report. He found amazing levels of Nembutal and chloral hydrate in her body—about twenty times what doctors would prescribe for sleeping. His logical (and official) conclusion: she committed suicide.

Marilyn's friends thought the overdose was not voluntary, but accidental. Her body was used to very high doses. Instead of counting pills, she gobbled them as long as she was awake. When she fell asleep (or comatose, sometimes), she stopped.

According to the official story, Mrs. Murray found her at 3 AM. She called Dr. Greenson and he called the police. The autopsy revealed she had died well before midnight.

People like plots. Several authors have written books to “prove” that Marilyn was murdered. The books sold very well, so you can wonder whether the authors really believed in their plots, or just wanted to earn a few million dollars easily. According to these authors, Marilyn had two lovers named Kennedy: Jack, the President, and Robert, his brother. She was angry because Robert didn't want to divorce and marry her. She knew State secrets. She threatened to call a press conference, either to reveal the secrets or to disclose that the two

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brothers were her lovers. Robert ordered the FBI—which he controlled as Attorney General—to kill her. He spent that night in San Francisco. He could have flown to Los Angeles and back in a private jet, etc.

The most serious biography, by Donald Spoto, refutes the plot buffs' wild stories in a very convincing manner. The two Kennedy brothers were never really close to Marilyn. Robert never became her lover. She didn't know any State secret. Spoto agrees with the director John Huston. "Hollywood didn't kill her," Huston said (answering DiMaggio). "Those doctors did." He meant all the doctors who had been giving her hot shots and pills for years, but especially Greenson and Engelberg. While Greenson prescribed great quantities of chloral hydrate, which was supposed to wean Marilyn from barbiturates, Engelberg gave her Nembutal, a strong barbiturate. Taking Nembutal and chloral hydrate at the same time is very dangerous and can provoke death.

Spoto's analysis of the autopsy results and interviews with many people seem to show that Marilyn, feeling very tense, took Nembutal all day long to relax. Greenson didn't know about it, because the prescription was Engelberg's. When Marilyn told Greenson she wanted to stop her therapy, he was devastated and tried to control her by putting her to sleep with chloral hydrate. Mrs. Murray probably gave her the drug by administering an enema, which Marilyn was used to.

When Pete Crawford talked to her, a little before 8 PM., she was already dying and she knew it. That's why she said Goodbye. Dr. Greenson and Mrs. Murray tried to revive her. Greenson couldn't reach Engelberg, who usually pumped her stomach. He should have called an emergency service to give her oxygen, but he had to clear the incriminating mess first: the enema had emptied Marilyn's bowels. Mrs. Murray washed the body, the clothes, the sheets, the carpet. When Greenson finally called the police, at 3 AM., Marilyn had been dead for at least five hours.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Ainsworth, Helen. West Coast manager of *National Concerts Artists Corporation*, the agency that represented the young Marilyn.

Allan, Rupert. Press agent to Marilyn and Grace Kelly.

Arliss, George (1868-1946). English actor who usually played historical characters like the duke of Richelieu or Disraeli in silent movies. Mr. Atkinson was his stand-in.

Arnou, Max. Columbia's casting director. Gave Marilyn a part in a musical, *Ladies of the chorus*.

Atkinson. Family of English actors, tenants of Marilyn's mother circa 1935. They took care of Marilyn for a year or so while Gladys was treated in an insane asylum.

Bacall, Lauren. Born in 1924, she became famous twenty years later for her parts with Humphrey Bogart (whom she married) in *To Have and Have Not* and *The Big Sleep*. Starred alongside Marilyn in *How to marry a millionaire* (1953).

Baker. First husband of Marilyn's mother.

Bendien. Marilyn spent a few months in this family when she was eleven.

Bogart, Humphrey (1899-1957). Star of many "noir" movies, like *High Sierra*, *The Maltese Falcon*, *Key Largo*, etc. Lauren Bacall's husband.

Bolender, Ida and Albert. Marilyn's foster parents. She lived with them until age 7.

Boyer, Charles (1897-1978). French actor who worked in Hollywood after 1935. Marilyn considered him one of the world's most attractive men.

Brando, Marlon (1924-2004). Became a star in 1951 with *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Still a star in *The Godfather* (1972). Marilyn's close friend.

Brynnner, Yul (1915-1985). Starred in *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) and many other movies. Refused to play with Marilyn in *Let's Make Love*.

Burton, Richard (1925-1984). His wild passion for his partner (and future wife) Liz Taylor during the shooting of *Cleopatra* delayed the completion of the film and contributed to its huge cost. As a consequence, Fox tried to avoid bankruptcy by suspending the shooting of *Something's Got to Give*, Marilyn's last film.

Calhern, Louis (1895-1956). Marilyn played the part of his young lover in *Asphalt Jungle* (1950).

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Callas, Maria (1923-1977). This Greek opera singer performed before Marilyn at President Kennedy's birthday bash. Her husband, the ship owner Aristotle Onassis, later married the President's widow, Jackie.

Carnovsky, Morris and Phoebe. Taught theater at the "Actors Lab." Young Marilyn studied there.

Carroll, John. Marilyn's manager and close friend in 1947 and 1948. Married to Lucille Ryman.

Chaplin, Charlie (1899-1977). Marilyn would have liked to play in a movie with him.

Charisse, Cyd. Born in 1921. Actress and dancer (for example, in 1952 in *Singing in the Rain*), she played Dean Martin's new wife in *Something's got to give*, Marilyn's last movie.

Clift, Montgomery (1920-1966). Became a star in *Red River*, a Howard Hawks western (1948). One of the three tired cowboys in *The Misfits*.

Coburn, Charles (1877-1961). Played old gentlemen in love with Marilyn in *Monkey Business* (1952) and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953).

Cohn, Harry (1891-1958). Columbia's founder and despotic boss. Signed in Marilyn in 1948, but failed to recognize her worth and sent her away.

Colbert, Claudette (1903-1996). Born in Paris, she stayed there only three years before moving to the States. She starred in many movies, for example *Cleopatra* in 1935. Marilyn played a small part in one of her films, *Let's Make it Legal* (1951).

Conover, David. Photographer who took the very first pictures of Marilyn while she worked at Radio Plane Company.

Cooper, Gary (1901-1961). Great Hollywood star (*Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, 1936, *High Noon*, 1952, etc.). Marilyn met him in 1954 when Fox gave a party to celebrate the release of *The Seven Year Itch*.

Cowan, Lester. Produced *Love Happy*, a Marx Brothers film in which Marilyn appeared for about thirty seconds.

Craft. Marilyn's piano teacher when she lived with her mother at age 7.

Cukor, George (1899-1983). Director of *My Fair Lady* and many other movies. Having directed Marilyn in *Let's Make Love*, began to shoot her last—unfinished—film, *Something's Got to Give*.

Curtis, Tony. Born in 1925. Played a saxophonist who pretended to be a woman—and loved Marilyn—in *Some Like it Hot*.

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Davis, Bette (1908-1989). Theater actress, then hot-tempered Hollywood star—partner of George Arliss in the thirties. Marilyn played her younger rival in Mankiewicz's *All About Eve*.

Day, Doris. Born in 1924. Singer and actress (for example, in Hitchcock's *The Man who Knew Too Much*). She refused to replace Marilyn in *Something's Got to Give*.

de Dienes, André. Hungarian photographer. Consoled Marilyn while her husband, Jim Dougherty, sailed with the Navy in the Pacific Ocean.

Diamond, I. A. L (1920-1988). Wrote the scripts of three Marilyn movies: *Let's Make it Legal*, *Monkey Business*, *Some Like it Hot*.

Dietrich, Marlene (1901-1992). One of the greatest stars in the thirties and forties. When Marilyn became a star too, Fox gave her Marlene Dietrich's dressing-room.

DiMaggio, Joe. Famous baseball player. Marilyn's second husband.

Dougherty, Jim. Marilyn's first husband.

Einstein, Albert (1879-1955). Marilyn considered this great scientist one of the most attractive men in the world.

Evans, Clarice. Starlet who shared a room with a young Marilyn.

Ewell, Tom (1909-1994). Marilyn's partner in *The Seven Year Itch*.

Fitzgerald, Ella (1918-1996). Jazz singer. Performed before Marilyn in the Kennedy birthday bash.

Gable, Clark (1901-1960). One of the great male stars (for example, *Gone with the Wind* in 1939). Marilyn admired him so much that she imagined he was her father and hanged his picture on her room's wall. They played together in *The Misfits*, in 1960.

Garbo, Greta (1905-1990). One of the greatest Hollywood stars before Marilyn. She stopped her career when she was 36.

Giffen family. Marilyn spent a few months with them when she was 9. They wanted to adopt her and take her to Mississippi, but Gladys refused to give her assent.

Goddard, "Doc". Grace McKee's husband.

Goldwyn, Sam (1882-1974). One of Hollywood's founders. His production company fused with Metro and Louis B. Mayer's company to become MGM.

Grable, Betty (1916-1973). Main Fox star during World War II. Soldiers tacked her picture to the wall, which gave rise to the expression "pin-up." She starred with Marilyn and Lauren Bacall in *How to Marry a Millionaire*.

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Grant, Cary (1904-1986). This English actor starred in many movies (for example, Hitchcock's *North by Northwest*, in 1959). He played the main role in *Monkey Business*, with Ginger Rogers as leading lady and Marilyn in a secondary part.

Green Family. Marilyn spent three months with them when she was 11.

Greene, Milton. This photographer encouraged Marilyn to break with Fox and founded Marilyn Monroe Productions with her.

Greenson, Ralph. Marilyn's psychoanalyst at the end of her life.

Harlow, Jean (1911-1937). Although she died of uremia when she was 26, she played in twenty movies and became a great star. Marilyn admired her and considered her a model. Like her, Marilyn used her mother's maiden name, was at first cast as a dumb blonde, then convinced Hollywood she was a talented actress.

Haspiel, Jimmy. This New York fan of Marilyn became her friend—or not, depending on what biographer you believe. The same remark goes for a group called "The Monroe Six."

Hathaway, Henry (1898-1985). Directed many movies, including *Niagara* (1953), in which Marilyn played her first leading role.

Haver, June. Born in 1926. This Fox actress was supposed to replace Betty Grable, but she chose to become a nun. She played the leading role in Marilyn's first film, *Scudda Hoo! Scudda Hay!* (1948).

Hawks, Howard (1896-1977). One of Hollywood's greatest directors: *Scarface* (1932), *To Have and Have not* (1944), *The Great Sleep* (1946), *Red River* (1948), *Rio Bravo* (1958), etc. He made two films with Marilyn: *Monkey Business* (1952) and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953).

Hayworth, Rita (1918-1987). Starred in *Gilda* (1946), *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) and many other movies. Launched by agent Johnny Hyde, like Marilyn.

Hemingway, Ernest (1899-1961). American writer. Marilyn considered him one of the most attractive men in the world.

Hepburn, Audrey (1929-1993). Her career paralleled Marilyn's. After playing small parts from 1951 to 1953, she starred in *Roman Holidays* (1953), *Sabrina* (1954), *Funny Face* (1957), *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Her last great part was in *My Fair Lady* (1964). She retired in 1967, but appeared in a few movies in the seventies and eighties. Whereas Marilyn was a sensual and slightly vulgar blonde, Audrey Hepburn was a thin graceful brunette. Hollywood never nominated Marilyn for an Oscar, but gave one to Audrey Hepburn for *Roman Holidays*, then nominated her four more times.

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Heston, Charlton. Born in 1924. Starred in *The Ten commandments* (1956), *Ben-Hur* (1959), etc. Refused to play *Let's Make Love* with Marilyn.

Heweth, Potter. Second photographer to shoot Marilyn, after David Conover.

Hohenberg, Margaret. Marilyn's first psychoanalyst.

Hudson, Rock (1925-1985). Starred with James Dean and Liz Taylor in *Giant* (1956) and many other films. Like Charlton Heston, he refused to play in *Let's Make Love*.

Huston, John (1906-1987). Boxer, painter, actor, Mexican cavalry officer, writer, then movie director: *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), *Moby Dick* (1956). etc. He directed Marilyn in *Asphalt Jungle* (1950) and *The Misfits* (1961).

Hutton, Betty. Born in 1921. Paramount star (*The Greatest Show on Earth*, 1952), discovered and launched by Johnny Hyde.

Hyde, Johnny. Marilyn's agent. He launched and loved her, but she refused to marry him.

Jacobs, Arthur P. Public relations company in charge of Marilyn. Her main press agents were Rupert Allan, Lois Weber and, at the end of her life, Patricia Newcomb.

Jean-Louis. French couturier. Made Marilyn's dresses in several movies—as well as the shining dress she wore for Kennedy's birthday.

Johnson, Nunally (1897-1977). Wrote the scripts of *How To Marry a millionaire* and *Something's Got to Give*.

Jones, Harmon. Directed one of Marilyn's early movies, *As Young As You Feel*. She met Arthur Miller and Elia Kazan on the set.

Karger, Fred. Marilyn's singing teacher in 1948. She fell in love with him, but he refused to marry her. To the end of her life, she stayed close to his mother, Anne—or Nana.

Kazan, Elia (1909-2003). Theater and movie director. Cofounded The Actors Studio with Lee Strasberg. Directed Marlon Brando, James Dean and other Actors Studio alumni in many movies: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *East of Eden*, etc. Met Marilyn on the set of *As Young as you Feel* and was her lover for a while.

Kelly, Grace (1928-1982). Hitchcock's favorite actress (*Dial M for Murder*, *Rear Window*, etc.). She played aristocratic young ladies before marrying prince Rainier de Monaco.

Kennedy, John (1917-1963). President of the United States from 1960 to his assassination. He probably slept once, but only once (in Palm Springs), with Marilyn.

Kennedy, Robert (1925-1968). The President's brother, Attorney General from 1960 on. He knew Marilyn, was rumored to be her lover but wasn't. Assassinated in 1968, while campaigning for the Presidency.

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Kris, Marianne. Marilyn's psychoanalyst in New York. She had her locked in a psychiatric hospital. Joe DiMaggio delivered her.

Laughton, Charles (1899-1962). English actor (and director of *The Night of the Hunter*), he was Marilyn's partner in a short scene of a sketch film, *O'Henry's Full House*.

Lawford, Peter (1923-1984). English actor. Played leading young men for MGM in the forties and fifties. After being Lana Turner's, Ava Gardner's et Rita Hayworth's lover, he married Patricia Kennedy, sister of the President. Hollywood's beautiful people loved his magnificent Santa Monica beach house. This is where Marilyn met Jack Kennedy.

Lee, Peggy. Jazz singer. Performed before Marilyn at the Kennedy birthday gala.

Leigh, Vivien (1913-1967). English actress. She starred in *Gone with the Wind* (1939), and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951). Married to Laurence Olivier.

Lemmon, Jack. Born in 1925. Billy Wilder's favorite actor, he played a bassist pretending to be a woman in *Some Like it Hot*.

Lipton, Harry. Marilyn's agent for her first movies. Johnny Hyde replaced him in 1949.

Logan, Joshua (1908-1988). This theater director gave James Stewart and Henry Fonda their first roles. He shot only ten films or so, including *Bus Stop* (1956), with Marilyn.

Lower, Ana. Grace McKee's aunt, whom Marilyn considered her own aunt. She lived with her when she was 15.

Lyon, Ben.(1901-1979). Former actor, Fox's casting director in the forties. Put Marilyn in front of a movie camera for a film test in 1946. Gave her the first half of her name: Marilyn.

Lytess, Natasha. Young Marilyn's coach. Most directors found her presence on the set quite obnoxious.

MacLaine, Shirley. Born in 1934. Actress and dancer. She refused to replace Marilyn in *Something's Got to Give*.

Mankiewicz, Joseph (1909-1993). Scriptwriter, then producer and director. Marilyn played in one of his movies: *All About Eve* (1950). He directed *Cleopatra*, the film that nearly bankrupted Fox.

March, Fredric (1897-1975). Star in the thirties and forties. Marilyn owned a white piano that had belonged (or may have belonged) to him.

Martin, Dean (1917-1995). After being a boxer, gas station attendant and professional card player, he was Jerry Lewis's partner in many comedies from 1946 to 1956, then became a star by himself—for example, with John Wayne in *Rio Bravo*, in 1959. He played Marilyn's husband in *Something's Got to Give*.

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Martin, Ida. Mother-in-law of Marilyn's uncle, Marion Monroe. Marilyn lived with her briefly when she was 11.

Marx brothers. The four brothers: Groucho, Chico, Harpo and Zeppo, made some of the funniest movies ever. Marilyn appeared in a very short scene of their last film, *Love Happy* (1949).

Mayer, Louis B (1885-1957). He owned a movie theater near Boston, then bought another, then went West and became a producer. When his company merged with Metro and Sam Goldwyn's production company, he became MGM's big boss. Peter Lawford's Santa Monica beach palace was one of his former houses.

McKee, Grace. Friend and colleague of Marilyn's mother, who makes her the child's guardian when she enters a psychiatric asylum.

Miller, Arthur (1915-2005). Playwright (*Death of a Salesman*) and Marilyn's third husband.

Miracle, Berneice. This daughter of Gladys and her first husband was Marilyn's half-sister. She lived with her father in Florida and only met Marilyn towards the end of her life.

Mitchell, Jimmy. Set photographer for *Something's Got to Give*. He took nude pictures of Marilyn, but Fox agreed to destroy them.

Mitchum, Robert (1917-1997). Born on the East Coast, he hoboed across the States as a teenager, spending time at 14 in a Georgia chain gang. He was Jim Dougherty's pal at Lockheed Aircraft during the war, then became a theater actor and a great movie star (for example, *The Night of the Hunter*, in 1955). Marilyn's partner in *The River of No Return* (1954).

Monroe, Della. Marilyn's grandmother. Born Della May Hogan in 1876 in Missouri, she died of a heart attack in 1929. As she had probably suffered small cerebral attacks and been depressed before her death, Marilyn seemed to believe she had died crazy. She also believed (or at least, said) that she had tried to kill her when she was one year old.

Monroe, Gladys. Marilyn's mother. Born in 1902. She died in 1984, long after her daughter. Deep depression kept her in psychiatric institutions most of her life, but she was probably not as crazy as Marilyn thought.

Monroe, Marion. Marilyn's uncle, son of Otis and Della. In 1929, he leaved his wife Olive (Ida Martin's daughter) and his three children and vanished.

Monroe, Otis Elmer. Marilyn's grandfather. Became crazy at age 41. This wasn't due to some hereditary ailment, as Marilyn believed, but probably to a nervous illness provoked by syphilis.

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Montand, Yves (1921-1991). French actor. Marilyn's partner in *Let's Make Love* (1960), he became her lover for a short while, then went back to his wife, French actress Simone Signoret.

Mortensen, Martin. Gladys's second husband. Early biographers thought he was Marilyn's father, but he left more than one year before her birth.

Murray, Eunice. Marilyn's home keeper at the end of her life. Sent by Dr. Greenson, she spied for him.

Negulesco, Jean (1900-1993). Directed one of Marilyn's movies, *How to Marry a Millionaire*. He would have replaced Georges Cukor and resumed the shooting of *Something's Got to Give* if Marilyn hadn't died.

Newcomb, Patricia. Marilyn's press agent and friend at the end of her life.

Newman, Paul. Born in 1925. Actors Studio student. Starred in many movies (*The Left-Handed Gun*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, etc.).

Noguchi, Thomas. "Coroner to the stars", he autopsied Marilyn and called her death a suicide in his report.

Novak, Kim. Born in 1933. Star of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958). She refused to replace Marilyn in *Something's Got to Give*.

O'Doul, "Lefty". Baseball player, DiMaggio's friend, witness at his wedding to Marilyn.

Olivier, Laurence (1907-1989). English actor. He adapted for the movies, directed and played several Shakespeare plays: *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, etc. He was a scary Nazi dentist in *Marathon Man*. He directed Marilyn in *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957).

Peck, Gregory (1916-2003). Starred in *Moby Dick* (1956) and many other films. He was supposed to be Marilyn's partner in *Let's Make Love*, but he refused the part after Arthur Miller changed the script.

Pierson, Arthur. Directed Marilyn's second film, *Dangerous Years*.

Plecher, Marge. Marilyn's dresser and friend. She married Whitey Snyder.

Powell, William (1892-1984). Marilyn's partner in *How to Marry a Millionaire*. Jean Harlow's "fiancé", he had flowers deposited on her grave every week. Marilyn asked Joe DiMaggio to do the same thing for her.

Power, Tyrone (1913-1958). Male star in the thirties and forties, he played Comte de Fersen, the lover of Norma Shearer/Marie Antoinette, in a 1938 film that young Marilyn loved.

Preger, Susan. Marilyn's classmate when she lived with the Bolenders.

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Preminger, Otto (1906-1986). Born in Vienna, assistant of the great theater director Max Reinhart, he followed him to the States in 1933. During the war, his strong German accent helped him play nazi villains. He directed *Laura* (1944) and many other films, including *The River of No Return* with Marilyn.

Rasmussen, Gladys. Marilyn's hairdresser.

Reagan, Ronald (1911-2004). Radio announcer, then movie actor from 1938 on, he published Marilyn's picture on the cover of an army magazine he was editing during the war. Much later, after a last role in *The Killers* (1964), he became President of the United States.

Reinhardt, Max (1873-1943). This great Austrian theater director and teacher emigrated to the States in 1933. He (and his students) influenced Broadway and Hollywood.

Reis, May. Marilyn's secretary in New York.

Remick, Lee (1935-1991). Theater actress, played in several movies (for example, Elia Kazan's *A Face in the Crowd*, in 1957). Fox wanted her to replace Marilyn in *Something's Got to Give*, but Dean Martin refused.

Roberts, Ralph, or "Big Ralph". Marilyn's masseur and close friend at the end of her life.

Rogers, Roy (1912-1998). The "Singing Cowboy" made many films with Trigger (1932-1965), "the smartest horse in the movies." Marilyn met him in Las Vegas in 1946 (and rode Trigger !)

Romanoff, Mike et Gloria. Managers of a fashionable Hollywood café.

Romm, Harry. Producer at Columbia, gave Marilyn a part in *Ladies of the Chorus*.

Rosten, Norman and Hedda. Marilyn's close friends in New York. Hedda was enrolled as her secretary on the shooting of *The Prince and the Showgirl*.

Russell, Jane. Born in 1921. Starred in several movies in the forties and fifties (for example, *The Outlaw* in 1943). Marilyn's partner in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953).

Ryman, Lucille. Wife of John Carroll, Marilyn's manager in 1948 and 1949. She got Marilyn her first important part—in *Asphalt Jungle* (1950).

Sanders, George (1906-1972). English actor. Played in many Hollywood movies, including Mankiewicz's *All About Eve*, with Marilyn.

Schaefer, Hal. Marilyn's singing teacher after Fred Karger. He "consoled" her when her marriage to Joe DiMaggio failed.

Schenck, Joe (1878-1961). One of Hollywood's great elders, he produced Buster Keaton's films and founded Twentieth Century Fox with Darryl Zanuck. Married to Norma Talmadge. Young Marilyn's "protector."

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Schiller, Larry. This photographer, on assignment for a French magazine on the set of *Something's Got to Give*, made several shots of a naked Marilyn that were published all over the world.

Shearer, Norma (1902-1983). Wife of the MGM producer Irving Thalberg, starred in many movies in the twenties and thirties—including *Marie Antoinette* (1938), which drove a young Marilyn (and many other people) to tears.

Signoret, Simone (1921-1985). French actress (for example: *Casque d'or*), married to Yves Montand.

Sinatra, Frank (1915-1998). Singer and actor (for example: *On the Town* in 1949). Friend of the Kennedy brothers, Joe DiMaggio, Marilyn—and some Mafia bosses, maybe.

Slatzer, Robert. In a book about Marilyn, this man pretended he had met her in 1946, had been her confidant until the end, had even been married to her for a few days. Actually, none of Marilyn's real friends ever met him...

Snively, Emmeline. Accepted a young Marilyn in her modelling school and agency, Blue Book, thus launching her career.

Snyder, Whitey. Marilyn's make-up man and confidant (from 1946 on).

Stanislavsky (1863-1938). Russian actor and theater director. His work on the actors' psychology influenced modern theater—for example, Lee Strasberg's Actors Studio.

Stern, Bert. This photographer shot beautiful pictures of Marilyn at the end of her life.

Stewart, James (1908-1997). Wonderful actor (*It's a Wonderful Life*, 1946, and 91 other great films). Marilyn met him at the party celebrating the release of *The Seven Year Itch*.

Strasberg, Lee (1901-1982). Directed the Actors Studio from 1948 on. Many famous actors studied there: Marlon Brando, James Dean, Paul Newman, Sidney Poitier, Shelley Winters, Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino, Robert De Niro.

Strasberg, Paula. Lee's wife. Marilyn's coach from 1955 to her death.

Talmadge, Norma (1897-1957). Star of the silent era. Joe Schenck's wife. Marilyn was named Norma after her.

Taylor, Liz. Born in 1932. Began her Hollywood career as a child star, became an adult star with *Giant* (1956, with James Dean), then *Suddenly Last Summer* (1959, with Montgomery Clift), etc. She behaved in such an extravagant manner on the set of *Cleopatra* that she nearly bankrupted Fox.

Chekov, Michael. Nephew of the great Russian playwright Anton Tchekov, studied with Stanislavsky. Taught theater to Marilyn in the early fifties.

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Turner, Lana (1920-1995). Star in the forties and fifties (*The Postman Always Rings Twice*, 1946, etc.)

Warner, Jack (1892-1978). Boss of Warner Bros.

Weber, Lois. Marilyn's press agent in New York in 1955 and 1956.

Weinstein, Henry. Producer of *Something's Got to Give*.

Widmark, Richard. Born in 1914. Played nasty gangsters and tough cowboys, beginning with *Kiss of Death* (1947). Marilyn was his partner in *Don't Bother to Knock* (1952).

Wilder, Billy (1906-2002). Austrian journalist and scriptwriter. Worked in Berlin until 1933. Guessing that his homeland would eventually welcome the Nazis, he emigrated to the States. He learned English fast enough to write the script of *Ninotchka* (1938, directed by Ernst Lubitsch, with Greta Garbo). He wrote and directed *Double Indemnity* (1944), *The Lost Weekend* (1945), *Sunset Blvd* (1950), etc. He made two of Marilyn's best movies: *The Seven Year Itch* (1955) and *Some Like It Hot* (1959).

Winters, Shelley. Born in 1920. This great actress has 130 movies to her credit (for example, *The Night of the Hunter* in 1955, *Lolita* in 1962, etc.). Young Marilyn's roommate, she introduced her to her teacher Lee Strasberg.

Woodfield, Bill. This photographer took some pictures of a naked Marilyn on the set of *Something's Got to Give*.

Wyman, Jane. Born in 1914. Played in many movies from the thirties to the sixties (for example: *The Lost Weekend*, in 1945). She was Ronald Reagan's first wife. After divorcing, she married Fred Karger, Marilyn's music teacher.

Zanuck, Darryl (1902-1979). Soldier in World War I at age 15, then steelworker, then professional boxer, he wrote stories for pulp magazines. When the studios bought some of them, he became a full-time scriptwriter. He wrote several hundred scripts (up to twenty a year). At age 23, he was already head of production for Warner. He founded Twentieth Century Fox in 1933 with Joe Schenck. He left Fox in 1956, produced *The Longest Day* (1962) as an independent, then came back to Fox in 1962 to save the company after the disaster of *Cleopatra* and Marilyn's death. He fired everybody and started a smaller studio, which he controlled until 1971. Today, Fox belongs to the Australian press mogul Rupert Murdoch.