

THE LOCATION MANAGER

CAPSULE

He has the job of making the film location function properly and operate smoothly – ensuring that everything, and everyone, is in place and ready for Gottfried’s arrival. There are few better at this task – he is famously organized, capable, and ready to deal calmly and drily with the countless unexpected details that always emerge. It is rumoured that he has ice for blood: and if anyone has seen the inside of his bedroom, they have never mentioned it. But how will he cope, when things don’t go to plan? – what will happen when that cool exterior cracks?

(Warning: this character will find it hard to deal with Gottfried’s continued absence and the responsibility to keep things on track, and will degenerate under the stress and uncertainty. It’s up to you how you want to play this.)

MEETING GOTTFRIED

You’d just started working locations, and were busily finding your way into your job – marshalling paperwork, making telephone calls, and wrangling suppliers. This fellow kept standing around, watching you – he wasn’t exactly in your way, in fact he was being careful to keep out of it – but he was in your eyeline. Distracting! And he kept on gently smiling.

Eventually you got fed up. “Excuse me, sir – if you don’t have business here, can you please clear off? I’m trying to work here.”

“Oh, but I do have business here,” he said. He stepped towards you, and it was as if the rest of the world melted away – the clattering of deliveries, the distant shouts of technicians, the rustling of papers, all faded right down. He placed his hands gently on your desk, across from you: his fingers were long and slender. “You are my business.”

He explained that he liked the way you worked: even though you had only just started the job. He said that he wanted you to work with him – that he needed someone like you, to keep the others in order. You had no idea who he was, but even so you were flattered.

“Finish up here, first, of course. You’re doing a great job here, and I don’t want you to interrupt it. Then come and find me.” He tossed you a business card: on the back it simply said ‘G.’

As he turned away, the real world crashed back in – all the sounds returned, seemingly louder than before. You blinked once or twice, took a breath, and got back to work.

That film tanked – but the first one you made with Gottfried, a few months later, was a substantial hit. And since then, his success and his reputation have only grown. You are quietly proud of your part in it.

BACKGROUND

Your childhood was ordinary: your father left you alone, and your sister tended to your mother's needs, so you were free to develop your own interests. You had a fascination for order – for control. You collected things, arranged collections, and spent happy solitary hours organizing your possessions. Going to the cinema by yourself was another beloved pastime – the world presented there on the screen made so much more sense than the 'real' world.

After your mother died, your father belatedly took some interest, and set you up in work – as a supply manager to a local hotel. You took to it right away: your skills and aptitudes fitted you well to the world of work. You were diligent and efficient. You never made many friends at work – you were too dedicated for that – but you enjoyed life, anyway.

Your sister and father drifted out of your life; you were too caught up in your tasks to bother with maintaining emotional links. Over time you progressed to event management, and then to location management in the film industry – where you have found your perfect metier.

The only trouble with making films is the people, you are sometimes heard to 'joke'. Gottfried is a wonderful employer: he trusts you and leaves you to your work. But the crew are a messy bunch, always coming up with unpredictable needs, and over-emotional responses – and the actors, of course, even more so.

Uncertainty and incoherence make you uneasy – and the worse they get, the longer they continue, the more difficult it is for you. Once your protective facade cracks, who knows what might come out – and what might be allowed in?

- ☯ What is your name?
- ☯ Where are you from?
- ☯ How old are you?

- ☉ What was your family background like?
- ☉ How has your relationship/sexual history been?
- ☉ What's your current living situation like?
- ☉ How do you feel about your gender?
- ☉ How do you feel about your sexuality?
- ☉ Is there anyone outside the set of *Stolen Moments* who's important to you?
- ☉ What's the most significant memory from your childhood?

PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

He's worked as Gottfried's right hand for years – a capable and competent assistant, who anticipates his master's needs as much as he interprets them. But you know he is ambitious himself – he hopes to shake off Gottfried's mantle, and become a director in his own right. And you suspect that he wants you to join him.

You yourself also have a long connection with Gottfried – you owe him your successful career. To leave him would feel like a betrayal. But perhaps it is time to move on – to try a different influence?

THE FADING STAR

When you were young, he was your favourite actor – he seemed impossibly handsome, heroic, and distant, up there on the silver screen. You wanted to be like him when you grew up – to *be* him, if possible.

Joining the film industry was a let-down in some ways – you saw the hard work and the grime and ordinariness that lies behind the glamour. But he has never lost his appeal, for you,. Even now his career is winding down, and the starring roles are drifting away – you still venerate him, and seek out his company. Perhaps he can give you some stability and guidance, in this time of trial by chaos.

THE PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Practically everyone on the location is obsessed with their image or other selfish concerns, incapable of seeing the bigger picture. But she has a solid and cool intellectual detachment – she understands how emotion can often get in the way.

You've enjoyed conversations together about politics, about science, about all sorts of things – you feel almost relaxed, in her company. You do sometimes wonder if she might be using some sort of psychological trick to try and win you to her side. But having a companion like this feels very valuable; so you do your best to dismiss such subversive thoughts.

THE STAND-IN

Your sister. You hadn't seen her in ages – you'd heard that she was still trying to find work in films (she started as a would-be actress), but even so it was a surprise. You aren't sure how happy you are to see her.

Although you had the same upbringing, she was affected quite differently – she seemed to get satisfaction from pleasing people; from tending to the needy, from 'saving' the failures. You find that hard to understand: to you, it seems a weak path. But it seems to work for her – she understands people in a way that, clearly, you do not. Your shared blood might drive you to cling to her amid the storm.

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Positive

THE GRANDE DAME – a veteran star who seems to genuinely appreciate your efforts to make things run smoothly. They don't make them like her any more.

THE NAIF – a youngster who seems eager to learn, and who actually shows you some respect for the work that you do – unlike most of these actors.

Negative

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR – she may charm everyone else with her winsome ways, but not you. You can see right through her: she is just as selfish, and tiresomely demanding, as any other actor.

ANGEL

You're at everyone's elbow, giving them what they need before they even ask for it. Without you, an operation like this couldn't run at all: you turn chaos into success. You remain calm, unflustered, efficient, and capable: you're a model colleague.

DEVIL

There is a distance between you and them. They are messy – disordered – generally, trouble. They think of you as cold and inhuman; and perhaps they're right, if to be human is to be mired and enmeshed in emotional stew all day long. To be honest, you are better than that.

TASK

On the face of it, it's the same job that you've done many times: ensuring supplies are in place, answering requests from colleagues, briefing and liaising with locals and with junior staff. It feels though, somehow, like there is more at stake this time. You will need to make sure to carve out some space and time for yourself – some little piece of order and control that you can escape into when you feel the need.

Out of character

Your task in Act 1 is to ensure that all creative and technical staff review and sign the morality clause in their contracts (included here). Some may be reluctant, or may seek to negotiate the clauses. You are empowered to make changes to individual contracts if you judge it appropriate. You are aware that if these standards are visibly breached, you will be considered to have failed in your duty to the studio. In Act 2, you will probably be expected to monitor your colleagues' behaviour.

DILEMMA

You're good at shuffling pieces around the board, making people fit into the right places to get the job done. But something inside you wonders: have you lost touch with your humanity? Might there be something to be gained from reaching out – from listening – from caring? Before it's too late?