

THE RUNNER

CAPSULE

She's drifted from one job to another, and washed up in the film industry as a general dogsbody and assistant. She doesn't complain: it pays the bills, and it's better than some of the other things she's done. Drifting with the tide has been the pattern of her life. But she's not as young as she used to be. How long can this continue?

MEETING GOTTFRIED

You were in domestic service at the time: cleaning up after people's kids, and putting them to bed. It was an undemanding enough job, and it came with food and accommodation. He was a guest at the house: you had no idea who he was, of course.

At first you thought perhaps he was interested in kids: he kept hanging round watching you tidy up around them, feed them, and so on. Then you thought that maybe he was after your body. But no, it was stranger than that.

"I've had my eye on you for a while," he said. His eyes were very bright. "Not just here, but before." He listed your previous couple of jobs. Right, so now this was getting rather sinister. Had he been stalking you?

"You're waiting for something, even if you don't know it – or you don't admit it," he continued. He opened his arms wide, as if to embrace you. You did not recoil, although part of you wanted to. He just touched you very lightly on the shoulders. "The film business needs people like you. Call this number – see what you think. It pays well, and it's varied." He gave you a card, with a telephone number on one side and the letter 'G.' on the other.

You felt obscurely disappointed. What that it?

"No," he said, as if having read your thoughts. "This isn't the 'something' – not yet. This number is just with some friends of mine. It'll be a few years yet: you'll pay your dues. Then, one day, you'll be working for me – on a very special project. And then you'll know."

BACKGROUND

You feel like all your life you've been waiting – for something to happen, or maybe for you to become something. When you were small, people thought you were full of promise – but somehow it never seemed to come to anything. The right opportunity, or the right motivation, never came along.

You've had a string of jobs – some menial, some better – and you've been good at some of them, bad at others. But even at the best of times, you never felt that this was really you – that this was what you should be doing. Working in film has been the most recent path, and it's gone well so far: mundane work, but you're good at it, and *Stolen Moments* is the biggest project yet – your first time of working for Gottfried Himmelhaus.

Have you been happy? It's hard to say. You've not been fulfilled, that's for sure: and can true happiness exist without fulfilment? You've had relationships, but they have never felt quite right either.

You're beginning to wonder, now – or rather, you're being forced to wonder, as the years go by – whether you will ever find that perfect place. Is there something wrong with you which is preventing you settling for contentment? Or is it just that you haven't tried the right thing yet?

- ☹ 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 METHOD ACTING INSTRUCTOR

It's annoying that she takes such an intrusive interest in you. She's too important for you to make a real fuss about her behaviour; but you sometimes wish that she would just mind her own business – and stop telling you that she sees promise in you.

Still, you expect she's only being kind. Perhaps being interested in you gives her relief from her job of trying to train the actors. And at least she is gentle about it. But all the same, her voice telling you that you could achieve more is like an unwanted reminder – like a voice from somewhere deep in your own conscience. A voice that you have so far successfully ignored.

THE PROPMASTER

You knew him when you were working in a seedy club, in a dark part of the city. He wasn't really a customer – he just used to hang out there and observe the proceedings. You reckon that he got a thrill from his detachment: from his lack of caring.

Your problem was that you started to care a little too much, as time went on. Abusing other people's bodies, for money, ended up by abusing your own soul. But you had trouble getting out of the job: the club was owned by dangerous characters. You had to pull a knife, and leave a mark on the manager, before they would let you leave. You aren't proud of what you had to do: but you aren't overly bothered about it either. You would have done more, and worse, if you'd had to.

THE PSYCHOTHERAPIST

When you were working as a nurse, she was just starting her career in psychology. You were often together alongside a patient – you tending to the battered body, her tending to the troubled mind. You shared thoughts and experiences together: it was exciting, stimulating. She had such a lot of new and interesting ideas, and you could see how much good she was doing.

She moved on after a while – started working for rich people. You didn't blame her: she might as well be making real money from her skills. You left the hospital yourself not long after. You have sometimes wondered: if you'd found a real vocation like she did, could you have seen success like she has? But no, that path was not for you.

THE SIDEKICK

He was your lover, but it feels like a long time ago now. You were in one of your more successful patches – he drifted into your life, and you had what seemed like a good time together. He was undemanding, accepting, good to be around. But eventually you became dissatisfied, and you felt you had to move on.

It's good to see him again, and no surprise to find that he is still in the same unambitious groove. Still trying to live down the memory of his parents. But perhaps there is something different about him now – perhaps the years have left some sort of subtle mark. Perhaps he has learnt something of value. It might be interesting to find out.

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Positive

THE INVESTOR – she seems to have found her niche in life, and to be enjoying it. You're happy for her.

THE RIVAL – he seems to have an eye on you, and has noticed your hard work and your edge.

Negative

THE MAN OF MYSTERY – he is as directionless as you, but he doesn't seem to care about anything or anyone. Inhuman!

ANGEL

You are here to help people – to make their lives easier and more pleasant. And you are good at it, and you enjoy it, most of the time. As you move through life, you bring little patches of fun and excitement into the lives of those who you interact with; then you move on, before you cause any deliberate hurt or harm.

DEVIL

You find it hard to care about others – or even about yourself. You can easily lapse into passive abuse. You are emotionally remote, and you often resent people's attempts to get to know you, to care about you, to help you. What right do they have to interfere in your life?

TASK

You are here to help: the rest of the crew have jobs to do, and the cast have demands to be met. You can make it all go more smoothly, but only if you understand their needs and the dynamics between them. Gottfried has asked you to be the oil that makes the mechanism run smoothly. Although he also said you are to be the glue that holds it all together... Either way, your task is to make sense of the chaos around you, and to try and impose some order upon it.

Out of character

Your primary task in Act 1 is to help THE ART DIRECTOR, THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, and THE PROPMASTER implement Gottfried's design notes for the three sets (included here) using your own creativity. You are also expected to help other members of the crew with any tasks in which they may require your assistance; to intercede between them and the cast; to establish what people need, and to work out how to satisfy their requirements. In Act 2, you will be expected to carry on this helpful work.

DILEMMA

You've got this far in your life just by moving from one thing to another; stating something, eventually getting bored, and moving on to whatever suggests itself next. It's worked for you: it's kept you alive, kept you busy. But is it really enough to keep saying you're waiting for the real thing to come along? Might there come a point where you have to take some choices, take some responsibility, and set a direction for yourself?