

THE STAND-IN

CAPSULE

Perhaps once she dreamed of being a star herself. But she's found so much more fulfilment and value as a supporter of stars' minds and souls, a facilitator of their capabilities. The job of stand-in is just an excuse to have her on the set: her real role is to advise, to calm, to persuade – she can rise above the squabbles and difficulties of the set, to help people see what's really important for them. She hopes that the people she helps will take away some of her wisdom, consciously or not: it's a slow road, but it feels like her mission.

MEETING GOTTFRIED

You were between jobs and working as a waitress. You were miserable. The pay was bad and the customers felt entitled to you. To your time, to your kindness and to your body if you didn't move away quickly enough.

And he was there in the corner, writing in the same notebook, every day for a week. He never bought much, but that didn't bother you. Business was slow and he was never difficult to deal with either.

One night you had the closing shift. You had turned off the lights and were about to lock the door when you heard a noise behind you. When you swung round, heart pounding he was standing there, close, although you were sure the place had been empty.

You opened your mouth to scream, to tell him to get out, to say something, but he shook his head and you fell silent. He started talking about method acting, about its demands, about the need to really understand.

“So you see” he said. “They will need you.” He pushed a piece of paper into your hand and left. When you unravelled it, shaking slightly, you saw an address and the words Stolen Moments printed below.

BACKGROUND

You and your brother grew up with a father who was frequently uninterested or absent. You learnt at a young age to take care of your mother's emotional needs, and work out whether she needed a shoulder to cry on or something to distract her from the thoughts of where your father could be, and who he could be with.

When you were alone in your bedroom you would practice acting passages from your books, being each character in turn. What interested you is what drove them. By becoming them you could learn what they cared about and who they were.

After your mother's death you were left alone, at least emotionally. Your father showed some interest in setting up your brother in business but neither of them showed any concern for you. You tried to make it as an actress, hoping that your understanding and caring would be enough. You never really progressed beyond bit parts and accepted stand-in roles. It was money after all.

This is where you found your true calling. Unnoticed, you could be by someone's side when they needed you. And because you were needed you were loved. You might only be a stand – in but you know there are people out there who still think of you fondly.

- ☹ What is your name (real name and/or stage 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 BEST FRIEND

You really shouldn't care about her as much as you do. You had a brief fling on set which is probably normal for film stars. She probably moved on the week after. You're not so naive that you don't know how the film business works.

You feel like there might be something more to it though. A few times she seemed to be close to opening up to you, but then she clammed up. Maybe there would be room for you in her life if somehow, you could get her to let her barriers down.

THE CLOWN

He seems interested in getting to know you better, which is exciting, but also frightening. You've normally been the one to show interest in other people and although it is reciprocated at times, it's normally done in a cursory way that's easy to shut down.

You know something lies behind his reputation though. Is he as happy off set as he appears to be on set? You feel drawn towards him, but would he change you? Make you into someone who was more like him, hedonistic and looking out for himself first? What if that's what he needs you to be? At least for a while?

THE DIVA

Someone who has let you in. You've known her for a long time and you know who she is. She tells you everything and you listen. And you care and she knows that. You can help and advise her, and occasionally dry her tears and that makes you feel worth more than you would ever dare to admit. You know her thoughts, even the unkind ones, not that you would ever judge her for them.

You wonder what would happen, if you started confiding in her, telling her how lonely you sometimes felt. Would it be fair to place that burden on her, while she obviously has problems of her own?

THE LOCATION MANAGER

Your brother. It's been awhile since you've seen him. He grew up like you, and he should understand better than anyone, but he sees things very differently. Where you view people as equals (*superiors even?*), who you can help and understand, he views them as tools to manipulate. He's the one person you should be able to get through to, the one person who you could save; but he always shuts you down when you try. You won't stop trying though.

His view of the world scares you sometimes. You don't understand it and you don't want to. But maybe you need to try, if you have any hope of reaching him?

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Positive

THE ART DIRECTOR – he's friendly and encourages people, persuading rather than forcing his vision on them. You like the way he handles his role.

THE CAD – you know there is more to him than he lets anybody see. You can see him hurting and you can't help hurting for him.

Negative

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – a professional, but that would be the best that you could say about him. He doesn't listen to people properly and brushes them off instead of caring about their concerns.

ANGEL

You care about people. You will always be there for someone who needs you. If someone's upset then you want to comfort them and understand what upset them. You can give advice too, if people ask for it and when you know them well enough to understand their perspective. And you want to know them well enough to understand.

You don't get drawn into the squabbles of the set, but you can help mediate and bring about peaceful solutions. You know directors admire you for it, and that sometimes you've been hired just for that reason.

DEVIL

You need to help, regardless of your own needs. And to do that properly you need to stay detached and try to understand the other person. Sometimes you wish you could be more open about yourself and your interests. About your own loneliness and your need to find a connection and maybe something more.

People need you, even if they think they don't. Even if they say they don't. When someone tries to push you away you need to try harder. They're probably hurting and scared to let you in.

ROLE

As the stand-in you need to understand all the characters in *Stolen Moments* as the actors do. Part of the importance of method acting is understanding how the actor relates the character to themselves. Have they had similar experiences? Do they have similar emotions? You need to find this out from everyone. Gottfried has advised you that this connection is the key thing that will allow the actor to play their role properly.

Out of character

Your task in Act 1 is to understand what connects each actor uniquely to their character. How does it relate to the role and what does it mean to them? This means talking to everyone to find out. You know that the method-acting style means that actors should play off their own insecurities to make the role more effective, so trying to reassure them or make them feel better may damage their connection to the character. Is it worth it? – is it right? In Act 2, the ethical questions around this area of work will probably be sharpened.

DILEMMA

You feel like that there's something within you that's growing stronger each day that wants to be loved and cared for as you, not for the fact that you can say the right things when necessary. You essentially really do care about people and part of that should be showing them who you are, right?

What if they reject you the way your father and brother did though? Your family were the only people who truly knew you and they turned their back on you. Maybe some part of you is just unlovable.