

THE STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER

CAPSULE

Having risen from humble and troubled origins, he's renowned through the industry for the alchemy with which he transforms base humanity into screen idols. But the camera has been a useful way of shielding himself from his subjects... preventing them from seeing into him. They are fascinating, beautiful, charming: but sometimes they can also seem sick, twisted, self-destructive. Being given natural gifts, rather than working hard and struggling up to achieve success, can be very bad for the character, it seems.

MEETING GOTTFRIED

He was a subject. You saw him first through your camera lens. If you had first seen him in person maybe he would've been ordinary, unremarkable. But you were at a summer wedding, and the sunlight glittered off the lake and he was there, in your shot, human but other worldly. And you immediately wanted to stop everything and take photograph after photograph of him until you could finally understand.

You walked over to him, almost against your will. Your role was to be unobtrusive, to capture the feel of the occasion, but not to speak. Dull work originally, but everyone here was important in some way, and the money was good. You had never quite stopped worrying about money, although there was no need now.

He wasn't surprised and offered his hand for you to shake.

"I came here to find you." You were uncertain, off-guard. You were in demand, sure, but you had an assistant, and barely anyone recognised you and you were never approached like this.

"I need a photographer. One who sees people. Really sees them." Glancing around you saw that the wedding guests seemed to have backed away, making space for your conversation.

He looked at you, into your eyes for an uncomfortably long time and then nodded.

"It has to be you. I'll call your office."

The next day you were booked to shoot the film.

BACKGROUND

From as early as you can remember you were sent out to beg for money. It was never easy. As a child you were alone, cold, and often ignored or kicked by passers-by. You would normally return home with just enough money for the tenement you lived in, if not always enough for food.

To the people who passed you, you were invisible: but you saw them. Years before you even touched a camera, before you knew what photography was, you were framing shots in your mind, capturing not just a person's beauty, but also their essence.

As you grew up, you tried to improve things for yourself. You became an apprentice to photographer and she was impressed by your talent, often allowing you to take the lead on smaller jobs. As your reputation as a talented local photographer increased more people requested your services.

When you started getting requests from film directors, it felt like a dream come true. As the films starting getting bigger and bigger and your name more and more renowned, your beginnings were spoken about in terms of admiration rather than disgust. You had made it despite the odds. The people who had kicked you and spat at you as a child now wanted to shake your hand and ask you to capture who they truly were.

- ☹ 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 DIVA

It's your job to make her look beautiful. You know your job. But you aren't going to relax your standards. You want to show her as she really is, to capture everything about her. Otherwise you're no better than any other photographer.

You've been a loyal friend to her, through rough and smooth – and it often has been rough. That's her nature! But perhaps you're the only person who sees through her tempestuous behaviour – sees the human being inside the glamour. She needs you – and perhaps you need her, too.

THE INVESTOR

Strange to see a familiar face after all these years. Of course, she was much younger back then, when you were living in the tenements, two families to a room and barely getting by. You remember her as someone who thought a lot; and you sensed a kindred spirit in the way that she planned and schemed to have something more.

She succeeded, and you are not surprised, although you do wonder what it cost her. She seems different now. Not that you blame her. At least deep down, she is someone like you; however it looks on the surface.

THE PROPMASTER

Someone who watches, like you. He seems interested, fascinated even, by what you can do. And that would normally irritate you, but with him you don't mind. His 'lone wolf' thing might be getting a bit tiresome, and at times you wish you can educate him about what life is really like, but he's meticulous and careful and seems to have an eye for the details that matter.

You respect him. So sometimes you show him what needs to be done, and talk about the people you photograph and how you capture them in the right moment and show what they really are. There aren't many people you would allow this close, but you think he probably knows that.

THE VETERAN

Someone to play cards with and maybe share a drink. He's a force for calm and offers advice that you find useful once in a while. You like him despite yourself. He claims that his wisdom comes from a life of opportunities he's taken and opportunities he's thrown away, a chance you will never have.

Maybe you the fact you didn't get to make his mistakes means you'll never be like him. Or maybe one day you will. You want to understand him better. Sometimes you find it hard to capture his true personality. As if you're missing something.

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Positive

THE CAD – one of your favourite subjects. There is so much more to him than he pretends, on and off screen. Looking at him through a lens, you feel like you can see who he really is.

THE GOOD-TIME GIRL – she can look sweet on screen when she needs to, but she's tough. And you love bringing that side of her out.

Negative

THE COSTUME DESIGNER – she doesn't appreciate the importance of what you do. Clothes can illustrate who a person is. Dressing someone for a film is one thing, dressing them for a photo is something else. Why won't she accept that?

ANGEL

People are fascinating. You want to learn everything and use it to show others, and maybe even the subjects themselves, who they really are. You love learning about people and you love showing them strengths and virtues that they didn't know they possessed. You've mastered the art of making people feel comfortable enough to show you their soul.

DEVIL

They aren't like you. You can see them, and sometimes you feel a flash of something, but normally it's just the excitement of a job well done. You can see them, but they can't see you and you mustn't get too close. Without the camera and your reputation to shelter you, maybe you would just become that child that was ignored and alone again, treated badly by people just like these. Better that you maintain a distance.

TASK

Take photographs of people in groups and one on one, that really represent them. Everything depends on getting it right, but you know how to do that. But Gottfried wanted more “show them their souls” he told you. The camera has always told the truth. But can you really tell people who they are and maintain your distance?

Out of character

Your task in Act 1 is to take portrait photos, individual and/or group, of as many of the cast as possible; and to take candid and ad hoc photos of the work that cast and crew are doing around the location; as well as capturing any other particularly interesting or scenic matter that might be useful for publicity. In Act 2, you will be expecting to continue this work.

DILEMMA

This has to be your best work. You need to give it everything you have. Gottfried made clear that this wasn't just another film. This was about the characters and the actors and closing the distance between them. You can take great photos. You can make people relax. But what if you let your own guard down a little? Could you be even better? What if you were honest? What if you told the truth? What if you let yourself care, just a little? Compared to your work, what personal cost could be too high?