

THE FADING STAR

CAPSULE

It's been a long and successful journey, and he's coming towards its end. He understands that the camera loves the young – his are going to be supporting roles, from now on. But that doesn't necessarily stop him from occasionally raging against the dying of the light. Perhaps he still has one last great performance – on, or off, camera – in him?

MEETING GOTTFRIED

It was in Germany, before the Great War. The streets were full of dashing troopers parading in uniform, their spurs and medals jingling. It had been a sunny summer – they were always sunny, back then. Doves were cooing in the linden trees.

You were at a pavement café, sipping an iced coffee, in the company of some beautiful starlet or other – there were so many, they blur together in your memory. A young man came up to you, clicked his heels together and bowed, and politely asked for your autograph. You were not yet such a big star that this was an everyday occurrence, so you were pleased.

He talked knowledgeably about some of your performances, and you invited him to join you: there was something very charming and engaging about him. Your young lady was perhaps a little disappointed... you can't remember now.

After a little while it seemed as though the rest of the world had faded away – the soldiers, the doves, the crowd, all like distant echoes. Only his voice carried meaning, only his eyes held your attention. He sketched out the future – the war, the peace, the recovery, the inevitable depression – how the film industry might grow and adapt. What a shrewd fellow he was! And how your place in that industry would persist – how your reputation would grow.

“And then, at the end – I will need you. And you will need me. When the time comes, you'll know.” He stood, and bid you both farewell: and the world snapped back into reality around you.

Since then, you've followed his own brilliant career with interest. Stolen Moments will be your first opportunity to work with him.

BACKGROUND

You've seen the film industry grow from its humble beginnings, taking part in every step of its evolution towards the high-tech super-slick multi-million operations of today. You've been there for the great moments – and created your fair share of them. Some of your old performances will live down the ages.

But it's not like that any more, you have to admit. You've got to the age now where starring roles are hard to come by – and being a supporting actor, playing the star's father (or grandfather...) is not at all the same. But it pays well, and it keeps you on screen, and in the audience's hearts and minds – maybe you should be satisfied with how your life has been lived, and accept its fading?

Back when you came into film acting, you didn't know how your career and your life might go – no-one possibly could have, it was all too new. You've indulged yourself, but not to excess: your health is still good. You've broken hearts, but not wantonly, not cruelly. And your own heart has had its quota of suffering and sorrow.

You've been feeling philosophical lately – looking back, summing up, coming to conclusions. Perhaps this is the start of what growing old means. But... you're not sure if you're quite ready for that yet. You've still got something left in you, that you can show these youngsters – you're sure of that.

- ☹ 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 ART DIRECTOR

Your eye was caught a while back by the quality of his work around the set – he has a real artistic skill, not like some of these people who just throw materials together and call it a scene background. He clearly cares about his work. You did some digging, and found that he used to be a real artist – and made some very interesting work. But he gave it up to come into the film industry.

It's unlike you to be drawn into someone's past life; and you're not sure why you are now. You've always appreciated talent, and you can just about convince yourself that that's the reason for your... fascination. But you're thinking about him more and more, and you don't know what it would mean for you if it turned out to be more than professional appreciation.

THE FEMME FATALE

You'd think you would know better, after so many years in the business, but no: you've been hooked, for sure. She's irresistible – delightful, teasing, dangerous, fascinating. No-one has snared your attention like this in a very long while.

You are experienced enough not to have just dived in, though. You know the risks! Being with her might bring out your emotions, might inspire you to great heights of performance, on the camera as well as in life – but it might suck you dry, break you down, destroy you as a man and as a cinematic force. Do you dare to eat the peach?

THE GRANDE DAME

She's been around the business as long as you, but somehow has retained her place at its head, while your own star has faded. Age, it seems, cannot wither her – she still looks as marvellous and as strong as when you were both young together.

Young, yes, and full of fire – you had a relationship that burned brightly, and that was the talk of the movie gossip sheets. It ended, as these things do: but you still have an affection for her. And still, in certain lights, there's something about her that quickens your tired heart.

THE LOCATION MANAGER

He's busy, calm, and organized – dedicated to his work, relied upon by Gottfried, and rarely showing much humanity when directing staff around the location. But he makes an exception for you.

Apparently, when he was a boy, you were his favourite actor – this is always nice to hear, and even nicer is that he still respects and admires you. Clearly the man has good taste! You never tire of his company. And, if he ever needs help, you are ready and willing to be called upon.

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

Positive

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR – charming and lovable, a really nice person to work with.

THE GOOD-TIME GIRL – she's clever and practical, and she hasn't let this crazy business get to her.

Negative

THE NAIF – his 'I'm so sweet and innocent' act tires and annoys you. No-one should be allowed to be that fresh and pure.

ANGEL

You've served your time, and had your success – it's time to leave the limelight to others now. You can still help and be valued, of course – supporting them, advising them, sharing your experiences and stories of the old days. It might be nice to have life become a bit more peaceful: you've earned the rest.

DEVIL

Something in you refuses to fade away gracefully – instead, it rages against the dying of the light. It wants you to roar – to shake the scenery – to show these new people what a real star is like, what a real man is like. Something in you is dismissive and contemptuous of their innocent young bodies, their naïve young minds.

ROLE

This is a blazing role, compared to what you've been doing lately – the opportunity for a performance that will capture the camera, letting you set the screen on fire – if you decide to push yourself towards it. But there's the danger that it might drain the last of your energy and capability – it might be the end of your career, even of your life. Can you face that possibility?

Out of character

Your task in Act 1 is to create and rehearse scenes from Stolen Moments, together with your fellow-actors. You should also meet with THE HAIRSTYLIST, THE MAKEUP ARTIST, and THE COSTUME DESIGNER to discuss your character's needs; and you should get your portrait taken by THE STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER. During Act 2, you will probably be expected to continue this work.

DILEMMA

This could be your last chance to make a strong impression – who knows what the future might hold? Either with your acting, or with your personality around the location. Do you want these people to have something to remember you by – and if so, what should it be? To fiercely burn out, or to gracefully fade away?