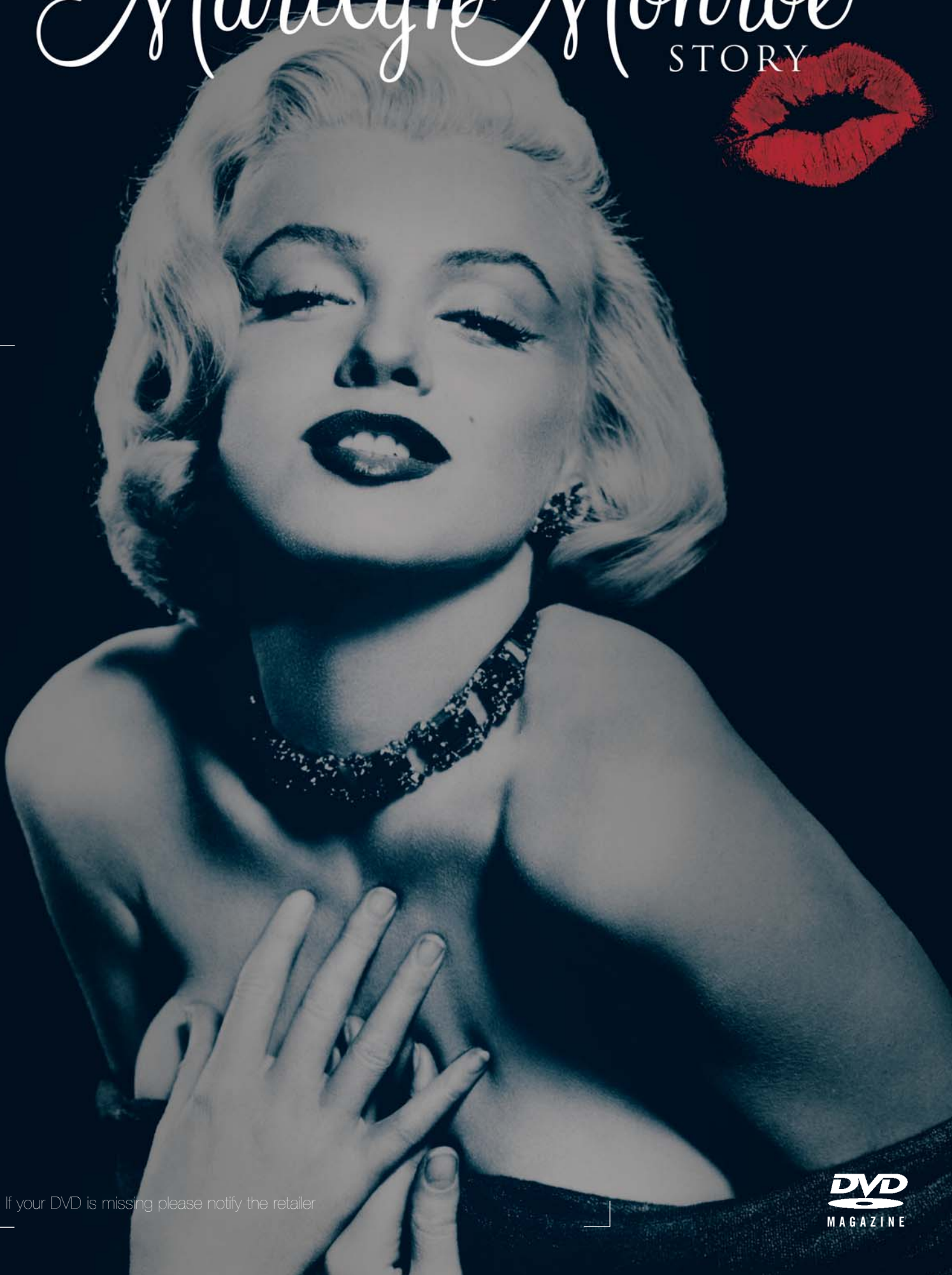


THE *Marilyn Monroe* STORY



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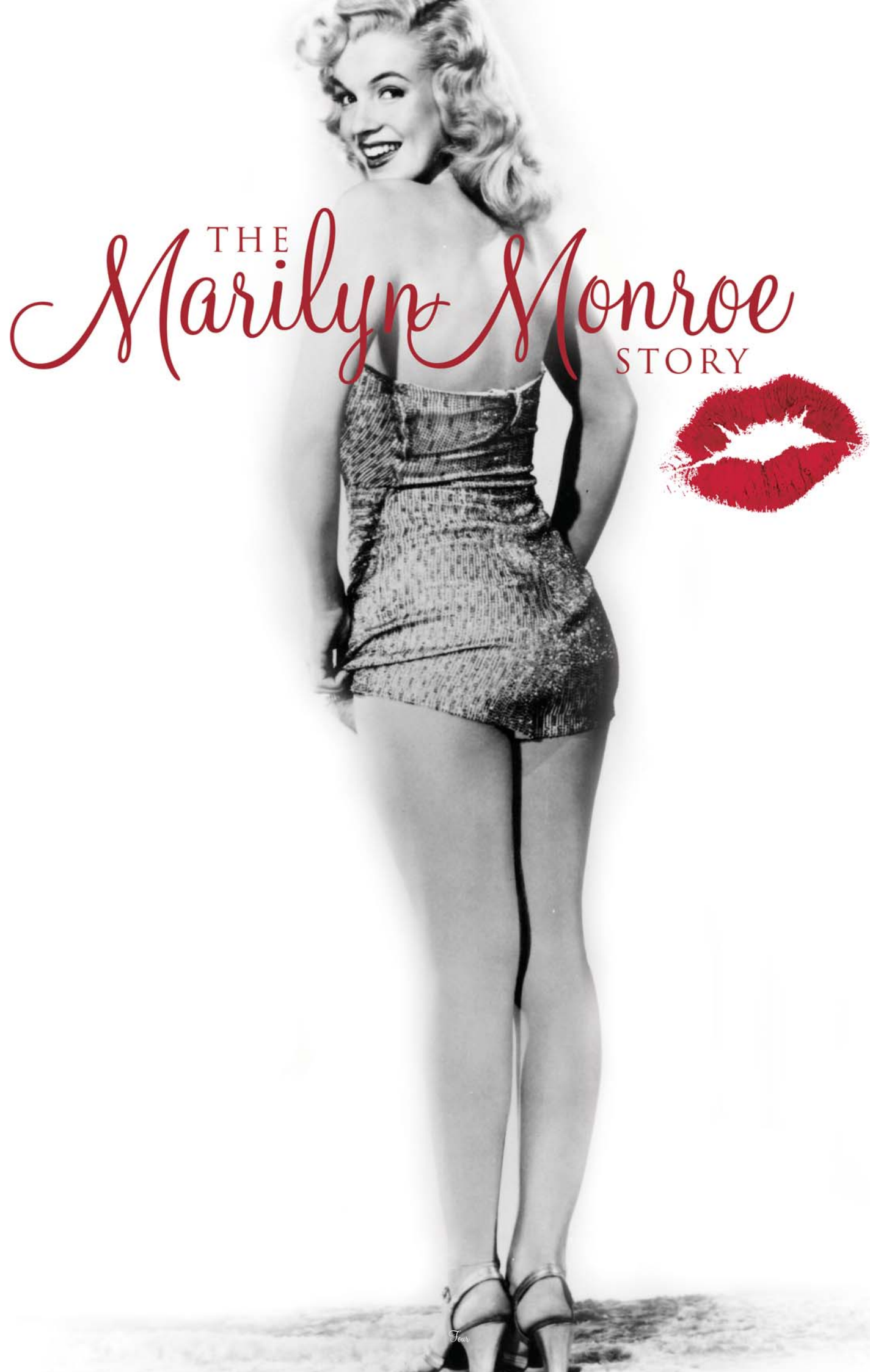
Marilyn Monroe was the absolute embodiment of Hollywood glamour. She was a fascinating beauty with curves to die for, a pout untouched by synthetic fillers, and an iconic image still recognised 45 years after her untimely death. She was a sex goddess – but there was a great deal more to Marilyn than platinum blonde hair and red lipstick.

She was undoubtedly one of the most adored women of the 20th century - and remains a global brand long after her death, but behind the ditzy Marilyn persona was a ferociously determined woman, who refused to be dictated to by the industry that created her myth in the first place, took on the puppet masters and won.

On June 1 1926, one of the most celebrated and controversial women of the 20th century was born in Los Angeles General Hospital. Her mother, Gladys Baker, a typical 1920s flapper, idolised film stars — including Norma Talmadge, who provided the inspiration for her daughter's name Norma Jeane.

Gladys had been separated almost a year from husband Martin Mortensen when she found out she was pregnant, and never knew for sure who Norma Jeane's father was. She told friends that it was a married man — Charles Stanley Gifford — but according to a friend, Gladys was always shacking up with somebody God only knows.

The baby girl was baptised Norma Jeane Baker. Until her birth, Gladys had been a film cutter at RKO studios, a job that made caring for her daughter impossible.



She admitted to friends that she wasn't cut out for motherhood, and her lifestyle made it even harder. She handed her over to a strait-laced couple called Ida and Albert Bolender, and struggled on at the factory, making occasional visits to her daughter, to whom she was known as 'The woman with the red hair'.

In 1933, when Norma Jeane was seven, Gladys decided to try again at being a mother to her. She removed her from the super-strict Bolenders and moved them both into a house she'd managed to buy with the help of a low-cost mortgage and a couple of lodgers.

Gladys kept a framed picture of Charles Stanley Gifford in her bedroom, fuelling Norma Jeane's fantasies that he was her father. They spent an idyllic few months together, until the death of Gladys' father drove her into a deep depression from which she never really recovered. She was taken to a rest home in Santa Monica the following year, and Norma Jeane was left in the care of a married couple who had been renting out the back bedroom of the house, until it was eventually sold and Norma Jeane sent back to the orphanage.

"No one ever told me I was pretty when I was a little girl. All little girls should be told they are pretty, even if they aren't."

Due to Gladys' mental instability, Norma Jeane spent most of her childhood in foster homes and orphanages. Her first real mother figure was mother Gladys' best friend, film librarian Grace McKee Goddard. Grace absolutely adored Norma Jeane and lavished attention on her, convincing her from an early age that her destiny was to be a movie star. Captivated by Jean Harlow, Grace moulded her surrogate daughter, taking her to the matinee shows and telling her, 'There's no reason why you can't grow up to be like her; Norma Jeane'.

Grace was eventually made Norma Jeane's legal guardian after Gladys was declared insane in 1935, and took her in for a while but when she fell in love with the man she was to marry, Doc Goddard, he didn't see Norma Jeane as being part of the deal. He convinced Grace to give her back to the orphanage, until they could afford to support her.

Grace visited regularly, taking Norma Jeane out and filling her head full of movie stars and fantasies. Norma Jeane adored Clark Gable, and was convinced that he was her real father — he looked like the man in the framed photograph that Gladys had kept by her bed. Norma Jeane stayed in the orphanage for two years, until 1937 when she spent a short few months back in Grace's care. While she was there, a very drunk Doc Goddard molested her — but when she told Grace, she was once again shipped off, at first to relatives in Compton, and then to Grace's aunt, a devout Christian Scientist called Ana Lower, who lived close to Grace and Doc. The move meant that Grace could enrol

Norma Jeane into a better school, and gave her a chance to guide her as she grew older.

At school, Norma Jeane was, very much an average student according to her high school teachers, who gave the impression that she wasn't well-cared-for at home. Her clothes didn't fit properly and in her own words, 'I sure didn't make any best-dressed list.' She earned herself the nickname 'The Mouse'.

By the age of 13, Grace had taught her protégé how to use make-up and experiment with her image, and after being a plain-looking girl, she blossomed into a high school beauty. Ever resourceful, she had started to make the most of her slightly too-tight school skirt, which was accentuating her newly developing curves, and even the girls started to take an interest in the competition as she wiggled down the corridors.

At the same time, Norma Jeane's lifelong history of gynaecological problems started. Every month she would be writhing on the floor in agony, and without the availability of strong painkillers or the Pill to help, she was just expected to learn to cope with the pain and wait it out. Ana Lower wasn't approachable when it came to anything vaguely related to sex, and her only advice was to pray, which by all accounts proved ineffective.

Boys began to follow her around, in competition to carry her books, and by the time she was 14, she was becoming popular — mostly with the boys. She started dating the local bad boy, Chuck Moran, who called her 'The Mmmmm Girl.' Although she liked the power she had over the high school boys, she was clueless about sex, and their flirtation was very innocent.

Norma Jeane caught the eye of her handsome next-door neighbour, Jimmy Dougherty at the end of 1941. Jimmy was 20, worked at the Lockheed Aircraft factory, drove a blue Ford coupe and was seeing several other girls when he met Norma Jeane. Norma Jeane thought he was absolutely gorgeous, but he wasn't really interested — she was five years younger than he was, and he saw her as a particularly well-formed little girl.

Grace, however, spotted her opportunity. She engineered a Christmas date, and encouraged the fledgling romance, knowing that her husband Doc was about to be transferred to the East Coast, and that Norma Jeane would be excess baggage. She told Norma Jeane that she was going to be leaving soon, but that she was working on something wonderful for her. Whatever Grace was up to, Norma Jeane felt abandoned by Grace again, and her sense of rejection made her even more dependent on Jimmy for attention.

It was Jimmy's mother Ethel that negotiated the wedding deal with Jimmy. He thought Norma Jeane was adorable, but worried that she was too young. The stark reality for both of them was that she would be 16 in 1942, and had two

options — marry Jimmy or go back to the orphanage yet again. Jimmy capitulated and Norma Jeane excitedly informed all of her classmates that she would soon be leaving school to marry her sweetheart.

On June 19, 1942 she married him, and they moved into a one-bedroom bungalow in Sherman Oaks, Los Angeles.

By all accounts Norma Jeane loved Jimmy, who insisted that there were never any problems with our marriage — until she wanted a career and I wanted a family.

Jimmy joined the Merchant Marines in 1944 and was sent to the South Pacific. Norma Jeane went to work at the Radioplane Company in Burbank spraying varnish on fuselage fabric and inspecting parachutes. One day, a crew of photographers arrived at the plant to take pictures of women contributing to the war effort for Yank magazine. Photographer David Conover saw the young Norma Jeane's potential, and by spring of 1945 she was known as the photographers' dream and had appeared on 33 national magazine covers.

Conover's use began sending Norma Jeane on modelling assignments, and Ethel, Jimmy's mother, disapproved of her daughter-in-law's conduct. Jimmy wanted to start a family when he came home, and Norma Jeane had other ideas.

The camera loved her, and within two years she was a reputable model who'd appeared on the cover of countless magazines. She enrolled in drama classes and started to dream of a career in the movies — but Jimmy's return in 1946 gave her a stark choice - her marriage or her career.

The career won. There were rumours of affairs with photographers, and Norma Jeane divorced Jimmy in June of 1946, a month after her 20th birthday, she interviewed with casting director Ben Lyon at 20th Century Fox.

Several days later she was called to do her first screen test, which was followed by a contract. She was offered the sum of \$75 a week, to be reviewed after six months, to act for the studio.

Soon after, Norma Jeane dyed her hair blonde and after some deliberation over how to pronounce Dougherty, the studio decided to change her name. She chose Marilyn.

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Monroe, taking her late grandmother's surname and the name Marilyn because it sounded good. And so a legend was created.

"I used to think as I looked out on the Hollywood night, 'There must be thousands of girls sitting alone like me, dreaming of becoming a movie star. But I'm not going to worry about them. I'm dreaming the hardest.'"

Marilyn tried to be a great actress, but it was not a skill that came easily, and she worried that she didn't have what it took. Fox seemed to prefer to use her as a model, posing for pictures in glossy magazines. She was dropped by Fox in August 1947 without explanation.

The years that followed were difficult. In desperate need of money, she had no choice but to go back to modelling, and according to some reports, even worked as a part-time call girl.

One of her first and most powerful friends was Joseph Schenck, who had been director of Fox Studios since 1935.

They met in 1947 and formed a solid friendship — which some say was based on his infatuation and her sexual favours. He pulled strings to get Marilyn a contract with Columbia Studios, and she joined Columbia in March 1948. Tutored by drama coach Natasha Lytess, who became a trusted confidante and mentor, she got her first significant role in the musical *Ladies of the Chorus*, in 1949, but was then dropped by Columbia.

While working on *Ladies of the Chorus*, Marilyn met and fell hopelessly in love with Fred Karger, the film's musical director. He took one look at the cramped studio flat she was living in at the time, and offered her a home.

He kept her dangling on a string, and never intended to marry her, on the grounds that she wasn't great mother material for his children from previous marriages. Marilyn admitted afterwards that their relationship produced more than one pregnancy, all of which she had terminated. Spurred on by Natasha, she called the relationship off.



Marilyn got a new contract at Fox, and met Johnny Hyde, the agent. Johnny promptly fell in love with her, proposing to her several times. She turned him down, saying that although she loved him, she wasn't in love with him, and even the promise of inheriting his fortune didn't entice her into marriage. Marilyn, despite her dumb blonde persona wasn't stupid. She knew that marrying a very wealthy man more than twice her age would make her look like a bimbo and a joke which might prevent her from achieving her goal of being a serious actress.

Even her former lover Joseph Schenk apparently tried to talk her into marrying Johnny but she was adamant. Johnny still adored her, and put her forward for small parts in *The Asphalt Jungle* and *All About Eve*. But just as Marilyn's star was in the ascendant - Johnny Hyde died, in December 1950. Marilyn was inconsolable, sneaking into the funeral against the wishes of Johnny's estranged family, and grieving for her friend and father figure to the point where Natasha Lytess was convinced she'd tried to kill herself.

“I’m not interested in money – I just want to be wonderful”

In 1951, Marilyn signed a seven-year contract with Fox, and Natasha came too. Ironically, Natasha was paid more than Marilyn. It seemed to pay off - Marilyn's performance as Claudia Caswell in *All About Eve*, also starring Bette Davis, was a success, getting positive reviews from critics.

Also in 1951, Marilyn met playwright Arthur Miller: Marilyn was attracted to his brilliant mind, while he was just blown away by her physical beauty. Despite the fact that he was married with children, they began an affair that lasted for years.

Since *The Asphalt Jungle* and *All About Eve*, Marilyn was getting vast amounts of fan mail, two to three thousand letters a week. The press office had sent out more than three thousand photos of her, and she was named Miss Cheesecake 1951 by the army newspaper *Stars and Stripes*. That summer she appeared in *Let's Make it Legal* —her thirteenth film. Between 1951 and 1952, She starred in a total of nine movies. She was also loaned to RKO to make a movie called *Clash By Night*, which earned her further acclaim.

Cinematographer Leon Shamroy stated what many men felt when they saw Marilyn on film. Shamroy said that he got the chills when he saw Marilyn on screen and that, "She had a kind of fantastic beauty — she's got sex on a piece of film." Behind the scenes, Marilyn's nerves often crippled her, and her quest for perfection often led co-stars and production crew to think of her as a bit of a diva — everything had to be just right, and she often forgot her lines through sheer nerves.

Despite all this, she managed to clinch the leading role in a serious film —and she gave a stellar performance in her role

as the deranged babysitter in *Don't Bother to Knock* in 1952. She drew on her own past experience of visiting her mother in an mental institution to portray a psychologically damaged woman, struggling to cope with loss, and the film was widely praised by critics.

"That's the trouble, a sex symbol becomes a thing. But if I'm going to be a symbol of something, I'd rather have it sex than some other things we've got symbols of."

In March 1952 Marilyn's past came back to haunt her with the infamous calendar pictures she'd tried to forget. Tom Kelley's pictures of a naked Marilyn were posted up on men's bedroom walls all over America, and there was a media furore when Marilyn was rumbled as being the nude girl in the pictures.

In a PR move that wouldn't have been out of place in the 21st century, Marilyn confessed it was her and admitted that she posed in the nude because she needed the money to survive. She just about avoided career suicide with a well thought out sob story — everyone felt sorry for the poor struggling actress and she managed to talk her way out of the studio cancelling her contract.

The publicity made Marilyn even more popular, and endeared her to women as well as the men who were ogling the calendar shots. A month later, Marilyn graced the cover of *Life Magazine*.

In early 1952, Marilyn was one of the most lusted after actresses in America, and found herself pursued by men. She had already met retired baseball hero Joe DiMaggio. Joe was besotted with Marilyn, and their romance was well documented. Retired and divorced at 37, he saw pictures of Marilyn posing in a short skirted baseball outfit and thought she was a fan of the game. After making some discreet enquiries, he realised she'd never actually been to a game in her life, and had no interest in baseball whatsoever, but the couple met anyway and pure chemistry overcame the fact that they had very little in common — Joe hated the whole fake Hollywood scene that Marilyn was so caught up in. At the same time, Marilyn's acting coach, Natasha, hated Joe on sight, which given Marilyn's desire to impress Natasha all the time, made life slightly awkward for all concerned.

In June 1952, Marilyn started work on the movie *Niagara*. At the same time she was offered the starring role in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, a role that had originally been earmarked for America's Sweetheart Betty Grable. Despite her reputation for being difficult, Henry Hathaway called her "The best natural actress I've directed" for her part in *Niagara*, which departed from the usual dumb blonde act and let her portray another unhinged woman, Rose Loomis, plotting to kill her older, jealous husband.





Marilyn's success in Niagara made Joe nervous and insanely jealous — he asked her to give up show business, but she refused — and almost in defiance she played up to her sex symbol image by revealing to columnist Earl Wilson that she never wore underwear. She then demonstrated this by wearing a tight, low cut dress to the preview of Monkey Business that summer. To make things worse, she then appeared at the Miss America parade in September wearing a dress that may as well have not been there, detracting attention from the contestant and attracting complaints from church groups across America. Marilyn's response?

“People were staring at me all day long...but I thought they were admiring my Grand Marshall's badge.”

In 1952, Marilyn was working on Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, another film that traded on the blonde by casting her as

Lorelei Lee, a cartoonish gold-digging cruise ship singer. The film was massive, and so it should have been, considering the number of retakes she insisted on. It took eleven takes to shoot the infamous, Diamonds are a girl's best friend number, even though the director, Lionel Newman had commented after the first, Gee, one take—wonderful — only Sinatra does that!

After apologising profusely to the cast for being made to retake the scene so many times, she agreed that actually, that the first take had been the best.

She developed a friendship with her co-star, Jane Russell which went against all media expectations — when it had been announced that the two curvy leading ladies were playing opposite each other, the papers had been bracing themselves for a bitchfest — especially as Jane was being

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paid substantially more than Marilyn. In June of that year, she and co-star Jane Russell received the honour of embedding their prints on the walk of fame in front of Grauman's Chinese Theater.

Early in 1953, Marilyn made a pact with Joe that she wouldn't show quite so much cleavage, as he was starting to complain that her exhibitionism was embarrassing him. At the same time, he had to agree to be nicer to Natasha Lytess, who was present wherever Marilyn went.

The pact came about following the public outing of the infamous gold lame dress Marilyn had worn for an award ceremony where she had been honoured as Hollywood's Fastest Rising Star in February 1953. Marilyn had been literally sewn into the dress, after her trademark weight loss trick of colonic irrigation hadn't quite flattened her stomach as much as she'd hoped.

Marilyn stole the show that night, and with one wiggle of her ample derriere she managed to outrage Middle

America, and put her rival Joan Crawford's nose spectacularly out of joint. Joan commented that, The public likes provocative feminine personalities but it also likes to know that underneath, the actresses are ladies

Marilyn then shot back with a near perfect quote, admiring Joan's mothering abilities and comparing them with her own, by then well worn, story of orphanhood. What she couldn't have known, which makes the quote all the more delicious, is that Joan Crawford's idea of mothering was not in fact admirable at all, as related by one of her adopted children many years later in Mommy Dearest

The dress had the same effect on the American media in the 1950s as the Liz Hurley Versace Oscar outfit, or the infamous Union Jack mini dress worn by Geri Halliwell to the Brit Awards in the 1990s. It was featured all over the front pages of the media. It was the sort of coverage every 21st century starlet would sell their Manolo Blahniks for, but it made Joe DiMaggio angry — Marilyn was his woman, and for his eyes only.

"There was my name up in lights. I said, 'God, somebody's made a mistake.' But there it was, in lights. And I sat there and said, 'Remember, you're not a star.' Yet there it was up in lights."

By the time Marilyn filmed *How to Marry a Millionaire* - a comedy about three man-hunting New York City models that co-starred Lauren Bacall and Betty Grable - she was completely under Natasha's spell, and would barely put a foot forward without her say-so. The irony was that she was developing dramatically as an actress without Natasha's interference. Natasha fed Marilyn's insecurities by demanding retakes where none were necessary, adding, "Well that was alright dear, but maybe we should do it one more time."

Natasha was eventually banished from the set by an exasperated producer — but in retaliation Marilyn refused to turn up for work the next day, claiming that she had bronchitis. Eventually, to placate their star, Natasha had to be reinstated. As if to thank her, Marilyn pulled off the best comedic performance of her career. The film crew had been anticipating a showdown between Marilyn and Betty Grable, whose place she'd taken on *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Again, they were disappointed. The gracious Grable walked up to Marilyn on their first day on set, eyeballed her, and said, Honey — I've had mine. Go get yours.

Photoplay magazine voted Marilyn the Best New Actress of 1953, and at 27 years old she was undeniably the best-loved blonde bombshell in Hollywood.

By summer, Marilyn had started her next assignment, playing a saloon singer in *River of No Return*, opposite Robert Mitchum. Much to her disgust, the film was a succession of clichés, which couldn't even be redeemed by a spectacular setting in the Canadian Rockies. By now, she was onto her 27th film, and her fifth leading part, but Fox still didn't seem to know what to do with her.

Although she detested the film, she applied herself to the musical numbers, singing four songs. She also disliked the director, Otto Preminger, who in turn seemed to consider Natasha's presence on set neither useful nor desirable. He no more wanted to direct the film than Marilyn wanted to appear in it, but both were under contract and found themselves having to get on with it.

Joe, flustered because he'd heard rumours of a flirtation between Marilyn and Robert Mitchum, flew to Alberta, Canada, giving Marilyn absolutely no space. He wanted to get married, but Marilyn was unsure. Joe had made his feelings about Hollywood, and the film industry perfectly clear, and his extreme jealousy made life difficult for a sociable Marilyn who liked nothing more than to invite people over for coffee and a drink at the end of a day's filming. She hurt her ankle filming in Jasper National Park, an

event that seemed to bring the press out in force, and for some reason, this seemed to annoy Joe even more. They finished filming in September, and on her return, Marilyn had to be protected from an over-excited crowd by Robert Mitchum, who commented wryly "She thought they were cheering for someone else."

Marilyn was a woman ahead of her time. Even as early as 1950 she could often be seen jogging through the service alleys in Beverly Hills and lifting weights to preserve her figure - not the sort of activity that was normal for a woman of that era. Despite the screen persona, she was an intelligent woman, who enrolled in an evening course in world literature at UCLA and turned up to classes in jeans — her further education and fashion decisions not shared by many women at the time.

Even so, she was clever enough to understand that knew that a lot of her saleability was due to her body, and she wasn't afraid to use her sexuality in a time when America was in a state of moral confusion about sex.

The premiere of *How to Marry a Millionaire* in November 1953 was by her own account, just about the happiest night of my life. Despite catty comments from some of her contemporaries, she shone with excitement and brushed off the criticism with a comment that rings true in today's celebrity-baiting culture, "It's funny how success makes so many people hate you. I wish it wasn't that way. It would be wonderful to enjoy success without seeing envy in the eyes of those around you."

She could have been talking about her beloved Natasha. Natasha had started to make unreasonable demands on Marilyn, including that she pay for her cosmetic surgery, and Marilyn was beginning to realise what everyone else already knew — she didn't need Natasha any more. In fact, she didn't need Natasha in the first place, as every single director would have gladly done without her constant interference. The news pleased Joe DiMaggio, whose opinion of Natasha had not mellowed at all. It was probably no coincidence that not long after Natasha and Marilyn parted company at the end of 1953, Marilyn & Joe were engaged.

Despite her popularity, Marilyn was still forced into roles she didn't choose by Fox, and was paid a ridiculously low salary considering the money that every film she appeared in made. To add insult to injury, she realised that Frank Sinatra, her intended co-star in *The Girl in Pink Tights*, would be earning per week three times the amount that she would be paid for the entire film.

After hearing Marilyn complain endlessly about the studio system, Marilyn's photographer friend, Milton Greene, suggested that she start her own Production Company. In disgust, Marilyn defied the studio and refused to show up



for the shooting of *The Girl in the Pink Tights*. It was no surprise when she was suspended.

"I don't mind living in a man's world as long as I can be a woman in it."

Joe and Marilyn were married on January 14, 1954, less than two weeks after her suspension from Fox. Announced to the press just an hour in advance, it was the union of two of the most adored Americans of the time. It was a simple wedding with very few people in attendance — and again flouting tradition, Marilyn didn't promise to obey her new husband.

Mobbed by over two hundred reporters and fans, the couple were forced to answer intrusive questions, then kiss again and again for photographs — much to the disgust of a growling Joe, who contradicted his new wife when asked how many children they were planning, where they intended to live, and whether she intended to continue her career. Marilyn and Joe travelled to Japan for their honeymoon, where they stayed for ten days.

Almost immediately, the marriage hit problems. Joe was obsessively jealous of Marilyn and the attention she seemed to get from both men and women. He was used to adoration, but felt eclipsed by his wife's immense popularity, and he was livid when the one press conference arranged in his honour became just another question and answer session about Marilyn.

Towards the end of their honeymoon, Marilyn was invited to perform for the troops in Korea. The decision cost her a broken thumb — supposedly a result of Joe's anger. It wouldn't be the last time Marilyn suffered from physical

abuse from Joe, although when she was asked by one of the press about her splinted thumb, she claimed to have just bumped it — whereupon Joe immediately changed the subject, which was unusual for someone who rarely acknowledged the media even when he and Marilyn were besieged by them.

Marilyn knew that in Korea she would be the object of ten thousand male fantasies, but she wasn't playing to their sexual fantasies — she wanted to prove to herself and her critics that she could perform live, and to be accepted by such a huge audience. She later said, "I felt that I belonged. For the first time in my life I had the feeling that the people seeing me were accepting me and liking me."

It was true — and she'd given the performance of her life, away from the glaring eyes of her husband, the critical eye of Natasha, and the directors who made her feel insecure. Notably, the performance was spontaneous, free from the self-consciousness she felt in the studio. She performed ten shows in four days, in front of a total audience of more than 100,000 soldiers and marines. Later she recalled that the trip "was the best thing that ever happened to me. I never felt like a star before in my heart."

Marilyn and Fox Studios had temporarily settled their dispute and Marilyn was back at work. She signed a contract to star in the movies *There's No Business Like Show Business* and *The Seven Year Itch*, and as if to annoy Joe even more, reinstated Natasha Lytess as her drama coach, along with musical coach Hal Schaefer and Jack Cole, dance director.

Unfortunately, Marilyn's fame and sex goddess image became a theme that haunted her marriage. She was spending long hours with musical director Hal Schaefer at the studio, during the filming of *There's No Business Like Show Business*, and there were rumours of an affair in the summer of 1954, which were denied hotly by Hal.

Whatever the true nature of their relationship, it was intense, and in July, Hal was found unconscious after taking a drug overdose. Nobody ever elaborated on his reasons — although there were suggestions that Marilyn had ended an affair or even that Hal had been on the receiving end of death threats. Joe was, not surprisingly, very unhappy about Marilyn visiting Hal in hospital, even though he was critically ill.

It was while filming *The Seven Year Itch* that Joe's jealousy boiled over into uncontrollable rage. It was the infamous skirt billowing scene. The filming of the scene had been witnessed by one of the biggest crowds that Lexington Avenue had ever seen, due to the plans being leaked to the press in advance. Unfortunately, Joe was also tipped off, and flew out to New York. He was so angry at the spectacle of his wife's underwear (she was at least wearing some) being on show in front of so many admirers that he beat her for being an embarrassment to him.

The day after the scene was shot, Joe boarded the plane to California — alone. Two weeks later, on 16 September 1954, the couple officially separated. In October 1954 Marilyn announced that she and Joe were to divorce. The two appeared at a court for a divorce hearing on October 27, divorcing on the grounds of Joe's mental cruelty. They had only been married for nine months.

Marilyn was later quoted as saying to friends, "When I married him, I wasn't sure of why I married him."

"Hollywood is a place where they'll pay you a thousand dollars for a kiss and fifty cents for your soul."

Marilyn had been suffering repeatedly with bronchitis and from the side effects of the sleeping pills that she'd started to take for her chronic insomnia. She regularly consulted psychiatrists, started to drink heavily, and began a habit of arriving late to work, in no fit state to work when she did arrive.

Although her divorce from Joe DiMaggio was final, his obsessive jealousy didn't stop, because he still couldn't bear the thought of his former wife with another man. One infamous night in November 1954, Joe and his friend, Frank Sinatra, were allegedly involved in a botched raid on an apartment belonging to Florence Kotz. While Florence was sleeping, two men broke down her door and barged into her apartment, taking photographs of her as she lay in bed screaming. Minutes later the men scrambled back out of the door, in a state of confusion.

Later it emerged that the men who broke into the apartment were Joe and Frank, who thought they were

going to catch Marilyn with a lover in the apartment. However, they had got the wrong address. Marilyn was in an apartment in the same building having dinner with friends. The mix up was nicknamed "The Wrong Door Raid" and Joe and Frank found themselves in court for illegal entry and destruction of private property.

In December 1954 Marilyn took Hollywood by surprise and announced the formation of Marilyn Monroe Productions, the production company she had been plotting with Milton Greene. This bold move was to eventually bring about the collapse of the traditional studio system and the way the studios owned their actors. Legally Marilyn was still bound to work for Fox for another four years. Milton Greene's attorney, Frank Delaney, found a way to invalidate the contract on the grounds that it was a "slave contract" that forced her to appear in roles that were essentially immoral. He also managed to find a legal loophole — Fox had neglected to tell Marilyn that her contract was to be renewed.

Although technically beaten, Fox were not going to let their star go without a fight, and started a smear campaign against her. She was publicly vilified in gossip columns, her co-stars were encouraged to pour scorn on her acting abilities, and she was warned she would never work in Hollywood again until "The Seven Year Itch" was released and took the box office by storm. Fox were in a corner now — the film managed to please the critics as well as the public, the reviews were brilliant, and the public were clamouring for more Marilyn.

Fox had to back down — and persuaded Marilyn back, through her new company, on a non-exclusive contract, offering her a salary hike to \$100,000 a picture. Perhaps even more important to Marilyn, through Marilyn Monroe Productions she now had director, story and cinematographer approval — and she was only contracted to make four films in seven years. It was a landmark victory that made people take Marilyn seriously as a businesswoman.





Marilyn left Hollywood and moved to New York City. From the end of 1954 to February 1956, she disappeared from the public eye in an effort to escape her chaotic life in California and lose the shallow blonde image that had made her famous. It was her chance to reflect on her life and reinvent herself.

"I don't want to play sex roles any more. I'm tired of being known as the girl with the shape."

Marilyn's quest for self-improvement led her to the famous Actors Studio in New York, where she was introduced to Lee Strasberg, founder of Method Acting. The Method relied on actors accessing old psychological traumas, and confronting any repressed feelings to help them play every part from experience. The Method was a favourite of Marlon Brando and Paul Newman, and Marilyn took to it with great enthusiasm. Lee Strasberg also took to Marilyn. She quickly became his favourite student, and he singled her out for private lessons.

Marilyn looked up to Lee, and soon she was travelling to the studio up to five days a week for training, and seeing a psychoanalyst at his recommendation. Another father figure to her, she became his star pupil and obsession. Meanwhile, Lee's wife, Paula, kept her regularly topped up with the pills she was starting to rely on a little too much.

While enjoying her self-imposed exile, Marilyn started seeing playwright Arthur Miller. They had met previously in 1950, by which time he had already won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *All My Sons*, and a Pulitzer Prize for *Death of a Salesman*. He was considered to be America's greatest living dramatist. He was also love at first sight for Marilyn.

The relationship started to develop in 1955 — at a time when Arthur was still married to Mary Slattery, with two young children. The couple dated secretly, telling anyone who asked that they were simply, just good friends.

Despite her reputation, Marilyn was quite happy to share Arthur, and didn't want him to divorce Mary for her. She was besotted with her new lover, and saw no reason to give up on him just because he was married to another woman. When she wasn't with Arthur, she spent time with Joe DiMaggio, neither of them knowing that she was seeing the other.

She broke her exile to appear at the premiere of *The Seven Year Itch*. This time it was Joe's turn to escort Marilyn,

although she made sure that everybody knew that they were just friends, and that they had no plans to re-marry. At the same time, she was spending more time with Arthur.

By the summer of 1955, Marilyn was becoming more emotionally dependent on Lee and Paula Strasberg, and would sometimes appear at their home in the middle of the night, complaining that her sleeping pills weren't working any more because she'd developed a tolerance to them. The psychotherapy they insisted on wasn't helping her, and she was suffering from terrible nightmares. To compound her misery, she was starting to feel suspicious of Milton Greene and his wife Amy. It was a difficult time for Marilyn, which she tried to block out with too many pills and too much champagne.

Her attempts to play down the affair with Arthur were thwarted, and she became known to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as Arthur Miller's companion. The FBI were watching Arthur because of his well-documented left-leaning politics, and at the time the American government was fearfully suspicious of anyone they thought could have Communist tendencies. The rumours of an affair put an end to any hopes of reconciliation with Joe, and their divorce was made final in October 1955.

By the end of 1955, Marilyn was planning two more films — *Bus Stop* and a new version of *The Sleeping Prince*, and had been described by *Time Magazine* as shrewd businesswoman.

"I am trying to prove to myself that I am a person. Then may be I'll convince myself that I'm an actress"

1956 was a busy year for Marilyn. She met with Laurence Olivier, his agent, and playwright Terence Rattigan in New York, to talk about their new venture, a film version of *The Sleeping Prince*, a play in which Laurence Olivier had appeared in London with Vivien Leigh a few years earlier. Marilyn had seen the play, and coveted the role of the American chorus girl who falls in love with a Middle Eastern royal. She was also certain that she wanted Laurence Olivier to reprise his role as the Carpathian prince.

Ever the attention-seeker, Marilyn decided to liven up the press conference at the Plaza Hotel to announce the project, and she arrived in a stunning low cut black velvet dress, held up with two flimsy shoulder straps. As the press asked the group inane questions, Marilyn's devious plan to



liven up proceedings swung into action. She leaned forward for one of the photographers, smiled demurely, and as if by magic, one of the dresses straps broke gracefully, causing mayhem as every flashbulb in the room went off at once.

Unperturbed, she asked for a safety pin, and carried on.

While Marilyn was vamping it up for the world's media, and excitedly planning her next movie project, Arthur Miller was coming under even more scrutiny due to their relationship. Newspaper columnists printed ridiculously exaggerated stories about their effect on the nation's youth.

“Teenage boys and girls worship Marilyn. When Marilyn marries a man who was connected with Communism, they can't help but start thinking that Communism can't be so bad after all!”

It was obvious that they were an item, and Joe DiMaggio's right-wing columnist friend Walter Winchell stirred up trouble, probably at Joe's insistence, in the press. He wrote, The next stop for Miller is trouble. The House Un-American Activities Committee Subpoena will check into his entire inner circle, which also happens to be the inner circle of Miss Monroe — and all of them are former Communist sympathisers! The American government was so paranoid about the threat of Communism that they were running scared of a movie actress who had

professed zero interest in the world of politics, let alone embraced Communism.

She returned to Hollywood in February, legally became Marilyn Monroe (although she had been known by her celebrity name for well over a decade) and seemed to radiate a new aura of confidence, noticed by countless interviewers during February and March. She ignored telephone calls from Natasha Lytess, who had been trying to make contact again since she'd been dropped completely by Fox Studios. Natasha was ill, struggling to get

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work, and knew that all it would take to get her reinstated was a word from her famous student. But Marilyn had moved on, and refused to take any of Natasha's calls.

Marilyn was working on *Bus Stop*, directed by Joshua Logan. She played Cherie, a saloon bar singer who falls in love with a cowboy. As if to underline her new serious image, she insisted that she appeared badly made-up and unglamorous, refusing to wear her usual designer costumes so that she felt more at one with her part. It was the first film she'd acted in using The Method, and she relied a great deal on Paula Strasberg's input.



Paula and Marilyn often worked late into the night, and Marilyn was left exhausted, emotionally strained, and fed with copious amounts of drugs. Not surprisingly, she was rarely on set on time. By March, she was in hospital with acute bronchitis, and on the telephone wailing at Arthur, who had moved to Reno for two months in order to get a quickie divorce from Mary.

Marilyn's trauma, and her anxieties about her life as an actress, seemed to bring out Arthur's protective instincts, and he now wanted to marry her even more. It was common knowledge by now that the two were a serious item, but Marilyn seemed cautious about another marriage. Arthur's was divorced from Mary in June.

When filming was over, Marilyn was invited to meet President Sukarno of Indonesia. He claimed to be a fanatical moviegoer and a great fan of Marilyn's, and his wish to meet her was granted. She was unimpressed by the president, commenting that, He kept looking down my dress, although you'd think that with five wives he'd have enough!

During a hearing of the House Un-American Activities Committee, Arthur asked for his passport to be returned so that he could travel to England in July and be with the woman who will then be my wife. This livened up the hearing no end, and the reporters went back to their news desks with something much juicier than the endless reports on tedious committee hearings. Apparently this declaration surprised Marilyn more than anybody. She put aside her doubts and married Arthur on 29 June 1956 in a four-minute civil ceremony.

A second, Jewish ceremony was planned for 1st July, and Marilyn's misgivings were evident. Milton and Amy Greene were fussing around the bride, making last minute arrangements, when a tearful Marilyn confided that she didn't know if she wanted to go through with the wedding. Milton prepared to tell Arthur the bad news, and work out a way to annul the civil marriage but then Marilyn called him back, saying that she couldn't back out. They'd invited people, and she couldn't bear to disappoint them. She went through with the marriage, putting on a stellar performance. Anyone who said that Marilyn couldn't act was proved otherwise!

Marilyn and Arthur flew to London in July, and spent the weeks following their marriage in England, where she was mobbed wherever she went. A visit to Regent Street left her so stressed that she fainted and had to cancel the following day's work. At a press conference at the Savoy she arrived an hour late but still won over the British press with a trademark skintight black dress and a large dose of charm.

Marilyn's impressive physical assets did little to win the respect of Laurence Olivier, who had his doubts about Marilyn's talents as an actress, and about Milton Greene's plans to take her out of the sex pot roles and establish her as a comedienne. He referred to her as 's delightful little thing' — incredibly patronising for a thirty year old woman — and told her, All you have to do is be sexy, dear Marilyn. Marilyn disliked Olivier, and her confidence plummeted. It didn't help that she'd recently found a notebook in which Arthur had confessed that he had been having second thoughts about marrying her. The adulation she'd had at the end of August when the critics were raving over *Bus Stop* seemed to pale into insignificance against the disapproval of the two men she most wanted to please.

She was nominated for a Golden Globe for her performance in *Bus Stop* and praised by critics. Bosley Crowther of *The New York Times* proclaimed: "Hold on to your chairs, everybody, and get set for a rattling surprise. Marilyn Monroe has finally proved herself an actress."

Finding Arthur's notebook was the beginning of the end of yet another marriage for Marilyn. He made no secret of the fact that he resented the Strasbergs, who he thought Marilyn had a near religious dependency on. He still had very little time for Milton Greene, probably because Milton realised that Arthur was trying to use Marilyn Monroe Productions for tax purposes, and to get financial backing for his own film.

The filming of *The Prince and the Showgirl* was traumatic for most of the cast, especially Marilyn. She felt undermined by Vivien Leigh, Laurence Olivier's wife, who appeared on set for a while and made no secret of her disdain. The Strasbergs were despatched back to New York, leaving Marilyn even more depressed, and she started seeing another therapist. To add to Marilyn's misery, she found out that she was pregnant in August — but lost the baby in September. Throughout all the stress, the film was completed under budget and with only two days of re-shooting, and as Elsie, the showgirl, Marilyn managed to put in one of the best performances of her career.

Her performance was also appreciated by one of her co-stars, legendary actress Dame Sybil Thorndike. Much to her delight (and Olivier's disgust) she told him 'With Marilyn up there, nobody will be watching you', and, 'She's really the only one of us who knows how to act in front of a camera!'

Whatever had been happening on set, Marilyn was the undisputed media darling of London, and to her delight she was invited to meet the Queen along with Brigitte Bardot,

Joan Crawford and the cream of the film stars of the time. Even for this once in a lifetime meeting, Marilyn managed to turn up late, but just in time to meet the Queen. She impressed the photographers in an off the shoulder gown and dropped to a perfect curtsy as the Queen paused in amazement, caught on camera looking straight down at Marilyn's pneumatic cleavage, which had been taped and pushed up to within an inch of its life.

Exhausted from non-stop filming and the traumas of the past year, Marilyn returned to New York with Arthur in late 1956 and promptly jetted off on holiday, beginning another extended break from acting.

"A career is wonderful thing, but you can't snuggle up to it on a cold night."

Marilyn planned to take on a challenging role in 1957 — the role of the New York Jewish wife. She had never been the perfect housewife in her previous marriages, and this time around it was even harder for her because she was more or less supporting her husband while he seemed to be doing very little.

They moved into a new apartment and Marilyn threw herself into decorating and rearranging the interior, and took to going out and about disguised in a headscarf and dark glasses. It was as if she was looking to reinvent everything about herself and leave Hollywood Marilyn behind.

In an attempt to please Arthur, Marilyn agreed to distance herself from Milton Greene and issued a statement to the press saying that he'd mismanaged Marilyn Monroe Productions. She dismissed Milton and his lawyers from the company. They publicly argued over his position as executive producer on *The Prince and the Showgirl*, which she had been encouraged by Arthur to refute. Milton was left out in the cold in favour of winning over Arthur's approval, but it was a bad decision for her, personally and for the business. Milton was one of the few people that Marilyn could rely on.

They never saw each other again, but Milton never publicly spoke ill of Marilyn despite the way she treated him.

Behind the scenes, Marilyn had always devoted a great deal of time to charities, usually children's charities. She adored children, and was desperate to be a mother. She found out, to her joy, that she was pregnant again in July 1957. Sadly, the pregnancy was ectopic and she was rushed to hospital in September where she lost the baby.

Arthur had started working on a new screenplay, a story he wanted to dedicate to Marilyn and turn into a film. She felt uneasy about the lead character, Roslyn — a part that was quite obviously being written for her — but gave Arthur the benefit of the doubt and let him carry on writing. She was trying to keep a low profile and give him the freedom to write — but she was financially supporting them both and ironically even paying alimony to his first wife. They argued a lot, especially while Marilyn was bored. She was angry that she couldn't give him a child and started drinking. Unfortunately, Marilyn and alcohol didn't mix. She tried to be a drinker but couldn't actually tolerate much, and on one occasion tripped and fell down the stairs while drunk. She wasn't badly hurt, and escaped with a bruised ankle and a cut from the whisky glass she'd been holding.

Meanwhile, as Marilyn withdrew from Hollywood, Hollywood started to replace her with identikit blondes. She'd gained some weight, mostly through not having to work, and although she was still gorgeous, she was 32 and there were younger actresses waiting in the ranks. She and Arthur were getting short of money too; after all, Arthur had earned nothing since before their wedding.

When she was sent the outline of a film called *Some Like It Hot*, she was enticed in by the comic storyline, singing opportunities and the 10% of the film's gross profits on top of the \$100,000 fee that Fox offered her to do it.

"What good is it being Marilyn Monroe? Why can't I just be an ordinary woman? I'd settle for just one baby. My own baby."

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Marilyn's diva behaviour on the set of *Some Like it Hot* was completely exasperating for everyone involved. She turned up insufferably late, demanded constant retakes of perfectly acceptable scenes because she didn't think they were good enough, forgot her lines and frequently burst into tears. Every time she cried, she would have to call in the make up artists again, delaying the shoot even more.

Bizarrely, she was afraid that Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis would look younger and better in their comedy make up than she did in hers. Tony Curtis had to kiss her over and over again for one scene, and famously compared the experience to, kissing Hitler — Paula Strasberg's influence over Marilyn's acting made her want to meld organically into her role and Tony simply wanted to get the scene over with.

She was taking massive amounts of sleeping pills, sometimes also taking them during the day just to calm herself down. She was disappointed with her role, even though she'd only taken it to pay the bills — it was just the sort of role she'd been so adamant about not playing any more when she set up Marilyn Monroe Productions. She was desperate to finish filming and get away from the tensions on set, and wrote to friend, Norman Rosten, "We are going through the Straits of Dire, and it's rough and choppy."

After an emotional phone call to Arthur, who had been trying to reassure her about some comments he'd made about her in the editorial for her LIFE Magazine photoshoot, she took one too many sleeping pills, probably with champagne, and promptly threw up so badly that she was admitted to hospital for a weekend. Arthur visited, but made it obvious that he was embarrassed by her behaviour. Even Jack Lemmon sympathised with her, noticing that she was going through some kind of hell on earth — suffering and still producing that magic on film.

Arthur put his foot down, and insisted that Marilyn only worked mornings — despite the fact that she didn't do mornings at the best of times. His reason — Marilyn was pregnant again. The film was already over budget and behind schedule, but filming wrapped up on 6 November, by which time the director, Billy Wilder, was barely speaking to her. Yet again, Marilyn's wish to be a mother eluded her. She lost the baby in December, blaming herself for drinking and taking barbiturates on an empty stomach.

Some Like it Hot previewed in March 1959, and despite her troubles, Marilyn was cheerful, even when a reporter spilled drink all down her dress. In May, she won the Italian equivalent of an Oscar for her performance in *The Prince and The Showgirl*, and she was in discussions about a new project when she fell ill and was taken back into hospital for an operation where she was treated one of many times for her chronic endometriosis.



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"Being a sex symbol is a heavy load to carry, especially when one is tired, hurt and bewildered."

Marilyn's next project isn't generally considered to have been one of her finest moments. In order to go along with her obligation to Fox to make four films in seven years, she picked *Let's Make Love* from a selection on offer, as the best of a bad lot, and there were problems right from the start. She wasn't happy with the script, and persuaded Arthur to rewrite it for her, which caused the original male lead, Gregory Peck, to walk away from the project. Yves Montand took his place and Marilyn developed a huge crush on him.

At a reception Marilyn hosted for the Montands in 1960, she commented, "Next to my husband and Marlon Brando, I think Yves Montand is the most attractive man I've ever met."

Marilyn, Arthur, Yves and his wife Simone Signoret collectively complained about the awful script, which was full of clichés, and not particularly funny. Arthur worked on the screenplay to attempt to salvage some dignity for his wife, but although this should have pleased Marilyn, it actually sent him way down in her estimation as he was defying the Screen Actors Guild strike of the time. Marilyn no longer looked up to him as the champion of the underdog that he'd always claimed to be — she believed that he'd violated his own beliefs to make money, and their marriage was in freefall.



By late spring, the problems with *Let's Make Love* seemed as insurmountable as Marilyn and Arthur's marital problems. The character Yves was expected to play was basically an idiot, and he already felt that his language issues put him at a disadvantage. It was probably his insecurities that endeared him to his co-star, and they developed a close bond. While Arthur was away, looking for somewhere to film *The Misfits*, Marilyn was sent home from work with a cold, Yves followed on with more than chicken soup and the pair started an affair. It was a short-lived fling that Marilyn enjoyed more for the attention than anything else. Despite gossip and tabloid rumours, Yves never intended to divorce his wife and marry Marilyn — and she knew that. Arthur, by all accounts, didn't appear to care.

He was still in Nevada, and Marilyn was lonely. Even Paula Strasberg had left her and travelled to Europe, so she turned to psychoanalysis to fill the void. By now she was seeing Ralph Greenson, at the time a narcissist of a celebrity shrink who had some unorthodox ideas. He relied heavily on chemical intervention, going as far as to use massive doses of tranquilisers to cure migraines. He also contradicted a fundamental idea of psychiatry — he thought that psychiatrists should become emotionally involved with their patients. This didn't bode well for Marilyn.

Greenson was obsessed with celebrity, and the problems that went with it. He saw Marilyn as needy and pathetic, but felt sorry for her, and before long she was seeing him seven days a week and telephoning him daily.

Marilyn was busy with meetings and wardrobe tests for *The Misfits*, but her health was suffering. She headed for Nevada with an armful of pills for pain and insomnia, and started the ordeal of filming. The cast list was a roll call of Hollywood icons, including Clark Gable, who Marilyn had been obsessed with as a girl, and *The Misfits* was one of the most anticipated films of 1961. The making of the film was a nightmare for all involved, not least because of the heat of the northern Nevada desert, an older leading man, an emotionally fragile Marilyn and the breakdown of a marriage.

Director John Huston gambled, drank, and occasionally fell asleep on set. Marilyn was sinking further into alcohol and prescription drugs, and Huston shut down production in August 1960, claiming that Marilyn was going away to detox. This was a lie — he'd lost \$16,000 at the dice table and needed to raise cash to pay back his gambling debts. If he shut down production, the weekly payroll money could be saved. Marilyn took the rap for the shut down, and when she flew to Los Angeles for a long weekend, the rest of the cast were told that she'd had a breakdown and was suspended for a week.

Although the shut down wasn't her fault, Marilyn was a mess — some of the close-ups after her return had to be shot in soft focus. As usual she was nearly always late on set, and some days just didn't bother to turn up at all. She spent her nights learning lines with Paula Strasberg, which just made her more tired. She seemed to sleepwalk through most of the filming, eyes glazed, looking tired, and without the luminous glow that fans were used to. It was as if she had given up.

The film itself, originally planned as a touching tribute from Arthur to Marilyn, had become a testament to the demise of their marriage. Instead of Marilyn's character, Roslyn, being a sensitive ingénue with a love of nature and life, the script took whole chunks of dialogue that Marilyn could have recalled from her miserable past and made the film into a bitter reminder of a failed marriage, a painful experience for everyone involved.

Clark Gable was exhausted, and so was Marilyn. She sobbed afterwards, 'I just couldn't face having to do another scene with Marilyn Monroe.'

“Ever since I became a movie star I've been really weird”

Marilyn was on a downward spiral. She didn't seem to be able to handle the stresses of *Let's Make Love* and *The Misfits*, and her professional reputation, like her marriage, was disintegrating.

On November 11, 1960, she and Arthur announced that they were going to divorce. After four and half years. Sinking into depression after the break up, she was in the throes of a severe addiction to barbiturates and alcohol, which was fuelled by Dr Ralph Greenson, who encouraged her dependency.

Marilyn was devastated when Clark Gable died of a heart attack, and blamed herself. After all, she'd kept him waiting for hours in the searing Nevada heat, day after day. Even the gossip columnists were pointing the finger at Marilyn, conveniently ignoring John Huston's behaviour on set or the three packs of cigarettes that Clark smoked his way through on a daily basis.



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Early in 1961 Marilyn was in a dark place, drinking alone, listening to sad music and popping pills. She was losing weight rapidly and was convinced by Marianne Kris, who she'd started seeing again, to check herself into the Payne Whitney Clinic, the psychiatric wing of New York Hospital. Tricked by her trusted friend, she was horrified to find herself surrounded by disturbed patients and locked in a padded room. She went into shock, crying and sobbing, screaming to be let out. The staff completely ignored her, other than to threaten her with a strait jacket if she didn't stop making a fuss.

After two days locked in a padded cell, she tried to get help by writing a letter to the Strasbergs, but there was nothing they could do. Eventually, in despair, she managed to talk the doctors into letting her make a phone call, and contacted Joe DiMaggio. He still adored Marilyn, and was quick to threaten the hospital with being dismantled brick by brick if they didn't release her. Under sufferance, their most infamous resident was discharged — and with reassurances from Joe that he would stay with her, she agreed to check into another private hospital, where she stayed until March.

“Happy Birthday, Mr President”

After the events of early 1961, Marilyn felt closer to Joe than she had done for a long time, but she still became involved in a brief but much gossiped-about affair with Frank Sinatra, which introduced her to some extremely influential people. She was invited to Dean Martin's birthday party in Vegas, and then to a lunch for President Kennedy — but

despite the glamour of the connections she was making, she resented Frank's possessiveness. Even though he was smitten with her, Marilyn was not ready for another overbearing man in her life.

She was mixing with some very high profile people towards the end of her life — including Peter Lawford, his wife Pat Kennedy, and Pat Newcomb, who became her best friend. The group socialised a lot together, throwing celebrity-studded parties and inviting the who's who of Hollywood. Sometimes high-ranking government officials would be at the parties, including Robert Kennedy and his brother, then President, John Kennedy. It was during these parties that Marilyn got to know the Kennedy brothers. Her relationships with Robert and John, unknown to the public, were common knowledge among the Hollywood Glitterati and Marilyn was often seen dancing or in intimate conversation with Bobby or John, who she was alleged to have been having affairs with simultaneously. Marilyn, in her innocence, didn't seem to realise that her deepening links with political figures had become such an issue.

In 1962, Marilyn moved to Brentwood, California, so that she could be closer to the Lawfords and Dr Greenson, who she was still seeing daily. On several occasions she had accidentally overdosed on sleeping pills and had to be revived, and to keep a close eye on her, Greenson brought in a live-in companion for her — Eunice Murray. Eunice watched over Marilyn in every area of her life, driving her to and from Greenson for appointments, receiving visitors and cleaning the house. She monitored everything Marilyn did, and kept track of her behaviour and moods, reporting back to Greenson.

In March 1962, Marilyn was awarded another Golden Globe Award, this time, the world's favourite female star.

She attended the ceremony with another rumoured lover, a Mexican called Jose Bolanos, who she had met while buying furniture. She had a green, floor length beaded dress made for the event, cut by Fox seamstresses to be virtually backless. It was, according to legend, so tight that she could hardly move. The night wasn't great — she was heavily sedated, drunk and slurring her words, and her appearance sent shockwaves around Hollywood.

In April 1962 Marilyn was pleased to finally start work on a new film, *Something's Got to Give*. The first day of filming was fraught — although she'd actually managed to appear on set at the agreed time, while suffering a severe sinus infection, she insisted on repeating one scene forty times, over a period of seven hours. The next day, she was ordered to rest for a week. She returned to work later in May, was sent home with a chill, and returned once again. Dr Greenson went away for five weeks, and Marilyn, while distraught at being abandoned, dismissed the hated Eunice in his absence, a move which delighted her friends — Marilyn was standing up for herself at last.

Something's Got to Give was horrendously behind schedule, and the final straw for the producers came when, as previously arranged, Marilyn took time out to fly to New York and appear at a birthday tribute for president Kennedy in May at Madison Square Garden.

She had planned the event, and the outfit, well in advance. The gown was spectacular — a sheer body stocking sheath dress covered in sequins and rhinestones. It was so tight that once again, she had to be sewn into it. She also boasted of wearing absolutely nothing underneath. Marilyn wiggled and pouted through a rendition of *Happy Birthday* to the president, starting a whole raft of rumours about an affair. The president thanked Marilyn for singing to him in "such a sweet and wholesome way."

Marilyn returned from her travels, only to find Eunice happily cooking supper, as if nothing had happened. She returned to work, despite receiving a breach of contract letter from Fox, and carried on working, with the threat of dismissal hanging over her. On 1 June, she turned 36, but insisting on a full day's work, director George Cukor refused to allow any celebrations until the cast had managed to film for a whole day. The atmosphere was strained, and although a cake was wheeled out after filming concluded, nobody stayed for the party.

Marilyn was convinced that she was about to be fired. In distress, she called Ralph Greenson's home number. As he was still away, his family was primed to react straight away if she called. His children went straight to her bedroom, where they found her suffering the apparent effects of a drug overdose. The following Monday, Marilyn refused to



turn up to work, until she had spoken to her advisers. Despite a last minute intervention by Greenson, who flew in to try and fight Marilyn's corner, she was fired, and a lawsuit brought against Marilyn Monroe Productions for \$500,000. Marilyn was replaced with Lee Remick — and Dean Martin, who had approval over his leading ladies, pulled out of the film an act of loyalty which moved Marilyn to tears.

The rumours about Marilyn and the Kennedys were beginning to escalate, and in the summer of 1962, Marilyn was warned that she had become a security risk and must sever all contact with the brothers. The relationships ended, Marilyn was tossed aside, and she spoke miserably to her friends about getting her revenge on the family she felt had used her.

Marilyn spent the weekend before she died at Lake Tahoe with Joe DiMaggio. Joe, worried about his ex-wife's associations with people he felt detrimental to her, had quit his job in July and asked her to remarry him. At the beginning of August, she was excitedly planning her re-marriage, and once again dismissing Eunice Murray. She was also coming to realise that maybe she didn't need Ralph Greenson, and he was beginning to worry that his cash cow was standing on her own two feet a little too much.

Candle in the wind

The following weekend Marilyn was found dead in her Brentwood home. Her death was reported as suicide resulting from an overdose of sleeping pills. However, many people still believe that she was murdered because she knew too much. A lot of the evidence has been destroyed or lost, including police files and interviews following her death.

By all accounts, Saturday, August 4, 1962 appeared to be a pretty ordinary day in the life of Marilyn Monroe. She saw Pat Newcomb in the morning, and was grumpy because she hadn't slept much the previous night. She spent the afternoon with Dr Greenson and Eunice, whose dismissal wasn't due to take effect until September:

Her friends thought that she seemed drugged in the afternoon. Pat Newcomb said that she left Marilyn's house somewhere between 5:30 and 6:00 pm. According to Eunice Ralph Greenson spent another hour with Marilyn and then left around 7 pm.

Joe DiMaggio Jr called Marilyn in the evening, and after the call, Marilyn was in a great mood. She immediately called Ralph Greenson to tell him about DiMaggio Jr.'s news. Peter Lawford called to invite Marilyn to a party but said that by this time she sounded heavily drugged. Lawford has quoted Marilyn as telling him, "Say goodbye to Pat, say

goodbye to the president, and say goodbye to yourself, because you're a nice guy."

At 4:25 am. Sunday morning, August 5 Sergeant Jack Clemmons of the West Los Angeles Police Department got a call that he would never forget. Dr Hyman Engelberg, Marilyn's personal physician, told him that she had committed suicide. When he and the backup police car that he had ordered arrived at Marilyn's home, there were three people Eunice Murray, Dr Greenson and Dr Hyman Engelberg.

They led Clemmons into the bedroom where her naked body was lying covered with a sheet, and pointed out the bottles of sedatives. He said, "She was lying face down in the soldier's position. Her face was in a pillow, her arms were by her side, right arm slightly bent. Her legs were stretched out perfectly straight. He thought she had been placed that way — as he recalled that an overdose of sleeping tablets usually causes victims to suffer convulsions and vomiting before they die in a contorted position.

The statements taken from the three individuals were odd. Clemmons was convinced that he was not hearing the truth. It was claimed that Marilyn's body had been discovered some four hours earlier, but that that Murray, Greenson and Engelberg couldn't call the police until Fox's

publicity department had given them permission. Clemmons also noted that there was no drinking glass in the bedroom from which Marilyn could have taken the many pills that she was supposed to have swallowed.

At the autopsy, it was determined that Marilyn died from an overdose of barbiturates. Remnants of sleeping pills were found in her liver and chloral hydrate was found in her blood. Marilyn's death was listed as a probable suicide. However, whether Marilyn committed suicide or not has been the source of great debate for more than 40 years. In her final will, Marilyn left Lee Strasberg all of her personal effects and clothing, to be distributed to her friends, colleagues and those to whom she was devoted. He was also given 75% of the residuary of the estate. The estate still earns millions of dollars in licensing fees whenever an advertiser or manufacturer uses her image.

During her career, Marilyn made 30 films and left one, Something's Got to Give, unfinished. She was more than just a movie star or sex symbol. A global sensation during her life, Marilyn's amazing popularity has extended beyond star status since her death. She will always be an inspiration —proving beyond all doubt that anyone can overcome personal obstacles and achieve their dreams. ■

THE Marilyn Monroe STORY





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