

# Wolves Howl for 'Niece' Just Like Marilyn Monroe

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BY PHILIP K. SCHEUER

Just about the time the late great Prof. Lamberti, xylophonist extraordinary, used to go into the climax of his act, a comely strip-teaser would appear on the stage behind him and go into HERS. Launching "The Stars and Stripes Forever" or some such rousing air, the professor would whip himself into more and more frenzied paroxysms as the applause grew to thunderous proportions, unable to contain his glee at the mounting ovation.

The cheers were all for the stripper, of course, but Prof. Lamberti never let on that he knew until the very last. Then he would turn and wrathfully empty the contents of a seltzer bottle upon the gal who had stolen his show.

### Audiences Go Wild

Marilyn Monroe has yet to do a strip-tease and nobody has squirted even soda pop at her—but her mere entrance into a couple of movie scenes has had much the same devastating effect on audiences. When Marilyn fled Groucho Marx in "Love Happy," every wolf in the house joined in howling pursuit. And when Marilyn called crooked Lawyer Louis Calhern "Uncle" in "The Asphalt Jungle," there wasn't a male within miles who

didn't find himself hankering for a nice "niece" like her. You see, Calhern wasn't really her uncle at all.

Marilyn herself grew up in Los Angeles, only a wolf call away from hundreds of unsuspecting readers of this page, under the name of Norma Jeane Dougherty. The early death of her father and the prolonged illness of her mother made her practically an orphan. She was adopted by family friends, the E. S. Goddards, and she also lived with an aunt, Mrs. Anna Lower. She always wanted to be an actress—and now, at 22, she is. A regular 20th Century-Fox contract actress.

### First Trial Failed

Marilyn, or Norma, was under contract to 20th before, but it didn't take. After completing her schooling at Emerson Junior High School and Van Nuys High, she started modeling "to keep eating." There was one month when her photographs made four or five magazine covers.

"Howard Hughes saw them," she relates, "and so did 20th Century-Fox. Hughes was in the hospital following his airplane accident, and the photos were shown to him there. But 20th

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**ORPHAN NO LONGER**—Marilyn Monroe, raised by guardians here, has been "adopted" by 20th Century-Fox—second time—and is now on her way to screen leads. Ever since she called Louis Calhern "Uncle" in "The Asphalt Jungle," the wolves have been howling for a ward like her.

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tested me first—in color—and signed me for a year.

"I worked in one picture, 'Scudda Hoo, Scudda Hay'—a little tiny part, but they cut me out.

## Dropped Again

"After that they dropped me. Columbia signed me, put me in a nine-day musical—'Ladies of the Chorus,' in which I ended up as Queen of Burlesque — and dropped me after six months.

"By then I had really begun to take it seriously, wanting to act. But I realized I hadn't learned how, and I was pretty miserable. I had finished school at 16, married at 17 and been divorced at 18—never mind who, it was a mistake and he has since remarried. Now it seemed it was my fate to be hired and tossed out by one studio after another.

"Things were tough. I got myself a good coach, Natasha Lytess, took a room at the Studio Club, limited myself to two meals a day—breakfast and dinner—and went back to modeling. I went without new clothes, everything, earning just enough to pay the rent and take my lessons.

## Got One-Minute Scene

"One day an agent, not my own, stopped me and told me Lester Cowan, producing 'Love Happy,' was looking for someone 'just your type' for added scenes. I rushed over and was hired on the spot. Groucho Marx directed the scene himself—and this time I not only got on the screen but stayed there one full minute. I could hardly believe it."

Cowan made the most of that minute. He persuaded Marilyn to go on tour, plugging the picture, on the ground it would be good experience. It was. Marilyn plugged "Love Happy" in New York, Detroit, Chicago and other cities—meeting the press, taking bows for charity, appearing on TV. The day after she returned, 20th sent for her. She was asked if she could dance, and when she answered "a little" she was given a part as one of Mme. Adelaide's four girls in "Ticket to Tomahawk."

## Had Part Reading

The day she got back from THAT movie, filmed in Colorado, Marilyn received a call from MGM Producer Arthur Hornblow and Director John Huston to read for the role of Angela in "The Asphalt Jungle." Both approved, and Marilyn heard herself, calling Louis Calhern Uncle Lon. Huston, she reports, was "very inspiring and very encouraging," and Calhern advised her, "You stick with it, kid."

Marilyn did. In no time at all 20th's Joseph Mankiewicz had looked at "Asphalt Jungle" and picked her to play Miss Caswell in "All About Eve." (Sardonic George Sanders introduces her as "Miss Caswell, a graduate of the Copacabana School of Arts"—a would-be actress who, unlike Miss Monroe, doesn't quite make the grade.)

"It was only a small part, but I was thrilled to be working with Sanders, Bette Davis and Anne Baxter—to say nothing of going from one Academy Award director to another!"

## Signed for Keeps

When Darryl Zanuck saw the rushes he sent for Marilyn's agents and signed her up for keeps. She has since tested for the lead opposite Richard Conte in "Cold Shoulder," which is now undergoing a rewrite job. She even met Zanuck, finally—and he told her he has plans for her future.

Anyone with half an eye would. Blue-eyed, blond, 5-foot 5½-inch Marilyn is a slick chick off screen as well as on. She also has the kind of poise that should protect her in the clinches. I mention this, to be sure, merely in the spirit of a kindly uncle.