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The Star

By Dale Eunson

I've got \$ 15, folks.

Fifteen dollars has been offered.

Do I hear 20? Do I hear 20?

Fifteen once, 15 twice.

Going, going, gone!

And now this beautiful vase.

What are my offers?

- One dollar.

- One dollar?

You don't seem to realize, mister...

...this stuff didn't just belong to
a nobody. It belonged to Margaret Elliot...

...one of the most glamorous, exciting
actresses that ever hit the silver screen.

She was your favorite movie star.

You stood in line to see her latest picture.

She made you laugh. She made you cry.

You were secretly in love with her.

Show Margaret Elliot

you haven't forgotten her.

And now, ladies and gentlemen,

what are my offers?

- Two dollars.

- Going, going, gone.

Maggie. You shouldn't be here.

What are you doing with that?

Phyllis always thought it was so beautiful,
and someone was gonna buy it.

Do you mind?

Why should I mind?

Buy out the whole place if you want.

- Be a scavenger. Pick my bones.

- Maggie...

Don't touch me

with your 10-percent hands.

Always reaching and grasping,
playing cozy with all the producers.

- You can do anything but get me a picture.

- Maggie.

Harry Stone, the great big star-maker.

The gentleman agent. My friend.

I am your friend.

I know. I know.

Come on, let's get a cup of coffee.

Going, going, gone.

Well, folks, what will it be?

- Maggie?

- Just a coffee.

- Make it two, please.

- Alrighty.

I saw in Louella's column that Joe Morrison is going to produce The Fatal Winter.

Yes, so did I.

Well?

Oh, sure, you had an option on that once, didn't you?

I love that book.

It could've been written for me.

The ending is horrible, but I could give him my ideas.

Harry, go to Joe.

One good picture is all I need.

Maggie, I hate to say this, but you're going to have to face a few facts.

I've faced the facts for three years, and they're not pretty.

Telephoning directors that I put in this business...

...and they're not phoning back.

Walking into restaurants, they say, "Hi, Maggie," and keep right on talking.

Drink your coffee, Maggie.

They can't put me out to pasture.

Not me.

I was a star, Harry.

That's right, and you won an Academy Award.

Maggie, I've been your friend for a long, long time, and I love you.

But there's no denying that fresh, dewy quality...

Well, something else takes its place.

Perhaps you could suggest how one keeps that dewy quality in this town.

I know it's tough, but that's what the public wants.

That new kid of mine's got it.

Barbara Lawrence.

Barbara Lawrence?

Joe Morrison signed her last week...

...and he's certainly got his finger
on the box-office pulse.

Look, Harry.

Would you go to Joe Morrison?

Tell him how much I love

The Fatal Winter.

Perhaps that would impress him.

One good part would put me back
just where I was.

More coffee?

Besides, Harry, I'm desperate for money.

I won't get anything from the auction.

That will all go to the creditors.

- I was won...

- I don't know how to explain...

...to the company

if I advanced you more money.

- You're into us now for thousands.

- Perhaps the company's bookkeeper...

...could refresh your memory as to the total
amount of the 10 percent to the company.

Forty thousand dollars

a year alone.

I've tried to help you,

but it hasn't done any good.

Sooner or later, we're right back

where we started, saying the same things.

Will that be all, folks?

Just the check, please.

Aren't you Margaret Elliot?

Yes, I am.

That's what I told Bill back there.

I said, "Bill, that looks like Margaret
Elliot," and he bet me you wasn't.

Well, you tell him he lost.

You see? The public remembers.

Well, thanks for nothing.

Maggie.

John Morgan must've cost you plenty
when you were married to him.

Now that those Westerns of his
are cleaning up...

You mean ask John for money?
Haven't you heard he's putting his savings
into a trust fund for the wife and kiddies?
Just a suggestion.
Don't you think I have any pride?
- Hello, Anita.
- Miss Elliot.
I know it's late,
but I must see Mr. Morgan.
Mother! Mother!
Gretchen.
Why, Gretchen, you're still awake.
That's all right, Anita,
I'll see that she gets back to bed.
My, you look beautiful.
I have the most beautiful mother
in the whole world.
And I love the way
you're doing your hair.
- I bet you had a fight with your boyfriend.
- l...
I did not. I fell out of a tree.
But, darling,
girls don't climb trees.
Well, I won't anymore.
My six months with Daddy
was up on the 17th.
I was wondering
when you'd come for me.
But you're happy here, aren't you, darling?
I like it, all right. Of course,
Ronnie and Jennifer get in my hair.
They're such babies.
You did come for me, didn't you?
It'll only take a minute
to get dressed and pack.
Where are we living now?
That's it.
Mother has a tiny apartment.
I don't care.
I just wanna be with you.
But Mother's gone most of the day.
- Well, where are you most of the day?
- At Mother's studio.

Mother,
I've got to ask you something.
Darling, not right now. Wait until
I've had a chance to talk to your father.
But he's on location,
and it's something very important.
Margaret, won't you come down?
- Hello, Peggy.
- If you go down, can I go down?
Look, monkey, you should be asleep.
But I'm not sleepy,
and I won't go to sleep for hours. Please.
No, no, no, darling.
- You go up. I'll tuck you in later.
- All right.
What brings you here this time, Margaret?
Can I get you anything? A drink?
- Anything?
- No. No, thank you.
If it's about Gretchen...
...she can stay on with us
indefinitely.
She's a delightful child.
Our kids adore her.
Thanks.
John calls me every day from Arizona.
I could tell him anything.
No. No, thank you.
Is it money?
Do you want more from John?
More money?
I never asked Johnny for money.
He's given you \$2500
over the past two years.
Well, I gave him \$25,000
when I divorced him so he could marry you.
- I dare say you didn't know that.
- He has no secrets from me.
He kept plenty of secrets from me.
That's a crack, I suppose.
You threw yourself at him.
You batted those eyes and told him
what a great big wonderful man he was.
You told him how bad I was for him,

that I was too busy with my career...
...that what he needed was a real wife.
- Pure soap opera. He fell for it.
- Because it happened to be the truth.
His name was Morgan.
He didn't like being Mr. Elliot.
Living in Miss Elliot's house,
entertaining Miss Elliot's guests.
Why, he wasn't even Miss Elliot's husband.
He was her lover by appointment.
When she wasn't too tired
or afraid to muss her hair.
Well, I think we've had our talk.
Forgive me.
You deserved to lose him, Margaret.
I've made him happy
because I've let him be Mr. Morgan.
Thank you very much
for the inside story.
Mother, you promised.
I can only stay a minute, dear.
We'll catch it
if we wake up Ronnie and Jennifer.
All right. Jump in.
You remember.
There's something I have to ask you.
Yes, sweetie, what is it?
You...
You are a big movie star, aren't you?
Why?
Well, the kids at day camp...
...they say you don't make pictures
anymore, and...
...Janie Marks, her father's a writer...
...and she said he told her mother that...
...you were...
...washed-up.
So I beat up on her.
That's how I got this scratch.
You tell this Janie Marks
your mother is a star.
I know you were.
But are you now?
Well, if you're a star,

you don't stop being a star.
But they say you'll never make
another picture.
I'm going to begin a new picture
in three weeks.
Oh, well,
when you're making this picture...
...can I do my six months with you?
Yes. Yes, darling.
Oh, am I glad. I love you.
You're so beautiful,
and you always smell so good.
I wanted to put on
some of the perfume you like.
But there wasn't any.
Why are you crying?
Haven't you ever cried
because you're happy?
No.
Well, you see,
some people cry when they are happy...
...and laugh when they are mad.
That's funny.
Isn't it funny?
Now, lie down.
Good night, you darling.
Get some sleep.
Good evening, Miss Elliot.
Good evening, Mrs. Adams.
I think the door's unlocked.
Your sister and her husband
stopped by. I let them in as usual.
Is that all? Thank you.
I wish that were all.
Mrs. Adams, you have to give me
one more day.
I'd love to give you more time.
But Jones and Company
had me on the carpet again today.
- If you could let me have just one month...
- Don't they know who I am?
Didn't you tell them that
there's a contract on my agent's desk...
...with just a few minor details

to iron out?
I told them,
but they are an impersonal organization.
You're not Miss Elliot to them.
You're merely the tenant
of number 1257.
But sometimes families are different.
Couldn't you perhaps ask your relatives?
My goodness, Margaret, where you been?
Roy and I gotta get started for Alhambra.
- I didn't know you were coming, Faith.
- It's the first of the month.
Miss Elliot. Don't let it worry you tonight.
We'll talk tomorrow.
You been to some glamour party?
Yeah, I had a ball.
- Hello, Margaret. I was hungry.
- Roy.
Goodness, you seem to have
time for everything...
...except get out to Alhambra.
Mama's been asking after you.
Her hip still hasn't mended.
She's in bed most of the day.
Of course, I'm not complaining,
but, well, with the twins on my hands...
You ought to see those twins, Margaret.
Such great big boys,
growing out of everything.
I haven't bought a stitch
for myself lately, not a stitch.
Why, the cost of shoes alone
for those boys...
I'm afraid I haven't any shoes
for 14-year-old boys.
For heaven's sakes, who was asking?
I was just telling you the family news.
- Aren't you interested?
- I have some interesting family news too.
I've just come from my auction.
You mean you're selling
all those nice things?
I'm not. My creditors are.
I'm bankrupt. Broke. Get it?

Understand?

Well!

Well, my goodness,

I always knew you were extravagant and all.

Whoever needed two Cadillacs

and all those servants and secretaries...

...and always redecorating the house

and such.

But I never said anything,

because you would have gotten mad if I did.

You were making all that money.

I still don't see where it all went.

I'll explain it to you.

I bought the house you're living in.

You promised to pay me back, remember?

And I paid for the birth of the twins,

their clothes...

...their saxophone lessons

and Roy's four operations.

Can I help it

if Roy enjoys poor health?

- And you know what Mother cost me.

- Mama is living with us now.

And I set Roy up in business

after he'd been fired...

...from the job I got him

in the Purchasing Department at the studio.

It was your idea

that he have an antique shop.

Roy didn't know anything about antiques.

Did you, Roy?

And he didn't know anything

about the laundry business.

That was his idea.

Was it his fault

everybody started buying Whirlpools?

Now, now, girls. Let's not have a ruckus.

If you'll just give us the monthly check,

we'll be shoving along.

Can't you get it

through your thick skull that I'm broke?

Dead, flat, stony broke! See?

I've got \$3.85 in my purse.

Do you want that, Roy?

Margaret didn't mean that.
I have given you over \$50,000.
You must have some of it stashed away.
Could I have \$200
on account tonight, Roy?
- What?
- For heaven's sakes.
Where would we get money like that?
You could print it if I'd only thought
to give Roy a printing press.
You're tired.
You wouldn't say that...
Yes, I'm sick, and I'm tired!
Now, leave me alone. Leave me alone!
- If that's the way you feel...
- That is the way I feel.
Now, I want you both to get out of here.
Get out!
Come on, Oscar.
Let's you and me get drunk.
To absent friends.
On your right,
ladies and gentlemen...
...is the home of Mitzi Gaynor,
rising young movie star.
How young can you be?
And on your left...
...is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Brinkman...
...better known to you tourists
as Jeanne Crain.
Oscar.
That looks like the kind of monstrosity
that Barbara Lawrence would choose.
Ladies and gentlemen,
the home of Barbara...
...Lawrence.
And that, Oscar...
...was the home of the wealthy, exciting...
...glamorous Margaret Elliot.
I remember the day you came home.
That was the day.
Going...
...going...
...gone.

I wonder where I am now.
Why don't you watch where you're going!
Take your hands off me!
Okay, sister, have it your way.
There's your bed. Sleep it off.
You don't seem to know who I am!
What are you in for, honey?
As if I didn't know.
Please forgive the matron for
failing to introduce us formally.
She's never read Emily Post.
Who do you think you are?
Everybody knows who I am.
I'm Margaret Elliot.
What a coincidence. I'm Snow White.
- Charmed to know you.
- But I am Margaret Elliot!
She's stinking.
- I guess she's alive.
- How can you tell?
Oh, my dirty name.
It is Margaret Elliot. Hey, wake up.
We got royalty.
We got a real live movie star.
Two hundred fifty dollars.
Here's your receipt, Mr. Johannsen.
Why did you do it?
You were in trouble, so I bailed you out.
Why you, of all people?
Well, why not me?
Sometimes it's good to talk about it.
I made a picture once.
I played a girl who was arrested.
It was called Night Court.
Critics said it was great.
I guess they had never spent
a night in jail.
Next time you'll know better.
Next time.
I still want to know
why you did it.
You did a swell thing for me once.
I go out to repair your bathhouse,
10 days later...

...I'm playing opposite
Margaret Elliot in Faithless.
And with a brand-new name. Barry Lester.
How I hated that name.
Well, there's never been a movie star
named Jim Johanssen.
Barry Lester, either.
Well, the name had nothing to do with it.
You're so right.
I saw Faithless two years later
onboard a ship out in the Pacific.
We were anchored in the harbor
of Kwajalein at the time. Man, was it hot.
Faithless wasn't so bad.
No, it wasn't so bad. It's only
the worst picture ever made, that's all.
It even bored those poor guys who hadn't
had any entertainment in six months.
When it was over, the gunnery officer came
up to me, and he said, real suspicious-like:
"Hey, chief. You any relation to that jerk?
You kind of look like him."
I'm sure glad I was wearing a beard
in those days. Why, if they'd ever found...
Go ahead, eat.
- I don't want anything.
- So you spent a night in the clink.
Eat your breakfast. It's paid for.
Here, give it to me.
There was nothing I could do. After they
read the papers, they changed the lock.
Don't tell anyone, but I managed to get out
some of your clothes.
Thank you. You're very kind.
I'm not kind, but I like to think
I'm a human being.
Thank you.
Where to?
Isn't this the end of the line?
- You must have plenty of friends.
- Sure. I'm the perfect guest.
Who wouldn't be happy to have me?
Get in.
This is it.

Right after the war,
I got title to this place...
...with the help of a GI loan.
Always wanted my own business.
Better than getting up in the morning...
...and having some character
slap makeup on your puss.
This was a sail loft before I fixed it up.
One thing about having a shipyard,
you can do these things for free.
I picked up a lot of these things
while I was going to sea.
What am I going to do?
Get any sleep last night?
With all that howling?
One of them was full of hop...
...and two of them got into a brawl.
Get yourself some sleep.
I'll have my lawyer square things at court.
I've got a lot of things to do.
I can't think.
I can't think.
Of course you can't.
I shouldn't be here.
There's something I've got to do.
I can't remember.
I'll be out in the yard if you need anything.
Hello, Peggy.
Peggy, did Gretchen read the paper?
Well, thanks.
Thanks. That was very nice of you.
What?
Oh, those nasty kids.
But you told her, didn't you?
You told her it wasn't true?
Well... Well, thanks.
Thanks for trying.
I'm all right.
I'd like to speak to her, Peggy.
I promise I won't upset her.
I want to talk to her, Peggy,
you've got to let me talk to her.
All right.
Hello, darling.

This is Mother.
How are you?
Sweetie. Sweetie, you didn't fall for
what those kids said, did you?
No, it was just a publicity stunt. Mother...
Mother was at the jail getting atmosphere
for her new picture.
Yes, I know what the papers said, but...
The reporters were all wrong.
You know how reporters are.
Of course it isn't true, Gretchen.
You know how policemen love me.
Remember that nice patrolman
at Bel Air...
...who used to come and see me
every Christmas Eve?
And I let you give him a present?
Well, why don't you play hooky
from camp for a few days...
...and let them gossip all they want to.
You know gossip doesn't hurt us.
Goodbye, darling.
All right. See you soon.
- You shouldn't talk to anybody till you rest.
- Are you a doctor or something?
Something.
You're gonna stay here a few days
until this blows over.
Then we'll decide where you're going.
Going, going, gone.
Come on, Margaret. Snap out of it.
Why don't you grab yourself a shower
and get cleaned up.
Then come on down and get some fresh air.
I don't see why you're so kind to me.
I'll tell you one day.
You know, this is a sweet little motor.
But it's in here for repairs
at least once a week.
Owner can't just let it purr
like it's made to.
He's gotta keep her going
wide open all the time.
Would you hand me that wrench?

Right there beside you. The wrench.

Thanks.

Remember that scene in

Vacation for a Lady...

...where I was snowed-in

in the forest ranger's cabin?

So?

Well, so this reminds me of it.

I was running from the ski resort because

I didn't wanna marry Ralph Bellows.

Ralph always played the rich,

stuffy second lead.

I was lost in the blizzard

and stumbled into a cabin, half dead.

It was a terrible-looking place.

Untidy, the dishes unwashed.

Thanks.

I didn't mean that. I meant the mood.

The lady. That was me.

- And the poor young man.

- Was me.

No, no. Clark Spencer.

Are you sure you never saw it?

I've seen it a thousand times.

It made 4 and a half million.

- You know all I ever got out of it?

- What?

Hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

I feel very, very sorry for you.

Would you hold this for me?

- What for?

- I've only got two hands.

Just lift up on it.

Do you mind?

Why should I mind?

You know something

I always remembered about you?

What?

Your perfume.

- What was it?

- Desire Me.

The most expensive perfume in the world.

The names they think up.

- Maybe that's where some of it went.

- What?

Your dough.

I'll tell you exactly where it went.

I was on top.

Put my name on the marquee of any theater, there'd be a line around the block.

But I was sick of the tripe they forced me to play.

I read how you hollered about that.

So I put my own money into three wonderful pictures.

The big companies wouldn't give me a decent release...

...so I lost everything.

They said I was box-office poison.

You wouldn't be bitter or anything?

Wouldn't you?

Maybe. Maybe not.

Margaret.

Did you ever figure it might be you who gave yourself a dirty deal?

- What kind of double talk is that?

- Well, it just doesn't add up.

If your name on a marquee makes people shovel in their quarters...

...then why isn't it there now?

They juggled the books.

They said all my independent pictures were flops.

Of course, they lied.

I got tremendous fan mail, and believe me...

...you don't win an Academy Award for nothing.

All right. Skip it.

I don't understand the picture business.

They won't give me a chance anymore.

You're confusing what was with what is.

That's why you got drunk last night and tried to kill yourself.

Me, kill myself?

If I were gonna kill myself,

I'd rip the lid off this town first.

Look at it this way, Margaret.
You've had a sleigh ride.
It was swell while it lasted.
Now it's over.
It's not over. It'll never be over.
And now for a five-minute summary
of the latest headline.
Beverly Hills, California.
Margaret Elliot, famed Hollywood star who
was arrested last night for drunk driving...
... gave the arresting officer...
Since she was released on bail,
efforts to locate her...
... have been without avail.
Where she is, nobody knows.
Reporters are at present checking
a report that she is visiting a...
I think I'll tell that announcer
the real story.
Margaret Elliot is the guest
of Jim Johanssen...
...wet nurse to sick boats.
Spending a glamorous holiday...
...with a mechanic
who bought her for 250 dollars' bail.
What did you say?
You know, I just figured it out.
- What?
- Why you bailed me out.
If that's what you've figured, you're wrong.
Well, that's why the heavy bailed me out in
a very successful film called Night Court.
Can't you ever think
beyond a script?
- The truth makes the man mad.
- Margaret, don't go on.
Or perhaps you were always
in love with me? Is that it?
Lots of men have been, and you're a man.
And I once thought you were a woman.
But I was wrong.
You're nothing but a career.
And when you've said that,
you've said it all.

Then you were in love with me.
I suppose I was.
I thought you were the greatest.
And now?
You wouldn't want to hear that.
Just listen to your ego.
It's all you have left.
- Good evening.
- Good evening.
- Could I have some sleeping pills?
- Your prescription, please?
I'm afraid I haven't any prescription.
I can't sell you sleeping pills
without a doctor's prescription, lady.
What a bore...
...when all I need is a good night's sleep.
Couldn't you...?
Excuse me.
Jim, I stole this.
I never stole anything before in my life.
Jim, what's gotten into me?
You're all mixed-up.
But I don't need perfume.
Nobody needs perfume!
- I'll pay for it tomorrow.
- What's the matter with me?
That's a mighty good question.
Going, going, gone.
No. No, you're not.
You know something is the matter,
and that's the first step.
What am I going to do, Jim?
Tell me what to do.
Well, I think we'll go sailing tomorrow.
You've got time to go sailing
and take your kid.
What's she like now? Your kid, I mean.
How can you tell what a kid's like?
Here.
Blow.
I'm sorry about the things I said.
Forget it.
I'm sorry about a lot of things.
Who isn't?

You thought I was doing you a favor...
...when I forced them to give you the lead
in Faithless, didn't you?
You were.
I'm going to be perfectly honest with you.
I wanted to show Charles Humphrey.
- Humphrey? What's he got to do with it?
- I wanted him for the picture...
...and he balked.
I heard that he said
he wouldn't play horse to my Godiva.
And it made me mad.
And I swore I'd pick out
the very first man I saw...
...and make him a bigger star
than Charlie ever was.
And I was the first man.
Next day, I was down by the pool,
and I heard someone yell.
I looked up on the roof, and there you were
with a hammer, cursing your head off.
I'd just banged my finger.
And I called, "Hey, mister,
come down here a minute."
- Remember?
- Yeah.
You were really something
in that blue outfit.
Really?
I'd never seen anybody like you in my life.
So you see, you don't owe me a thing.
An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.
Bail for a favor.
Margaret,
that's not the way real people live.
It isn't.
Here.
Might as well use it.
Jim, couldn't you take it back to the man?
Tell him that I picked it up by mistake.
And tell him that...
That's funny.
It hasn't any odor.
Where did this come from?

From a little drugstore near the theater,
on top of the counter.
It must have been a display bottle.
It's nothing but colored water.
Colored water?
Well, when you grabbed it,
you thought it was real.
It's the story of your life, isn't it?
Jim, look at the big fish.
It's jumping out of the water!
That's an old friend of mine.
I call him Rover.
Rover? What a name for a fish.
Be careful, Gretchen. If you fell over...
She won't. She's a good sailor.
Am I?
Mother, did you hear what Jim said?
- Jim said I was a good sailor.
- I heard.
If I am a good sailor, can I steer?
Why, sure. Man the tiller.
We're gonna change course now.
When we do, the first
thing we yell is, "Coming about!"
Jam the tiller way over there. That's it.
Watch your head, Margaret.
Gee, that was fun. Can we do it again?
And can I say it?
- Why not?
- Now?
All right. Now.
- That's it. Way over.
- Coming about!
We forgot to say "duck."
- You know what?
- What?
I haven't heard the word "Hollywood"
all day.
You see that horizon?
Beyond it,
there's 6000 miles of open ocean.
It's got a life all its own.
Back here in the city,
a million men...

...fight to make a buck so they can eat
and fight some more.
Aren't you fighting like the rest of them?
To make a buck?
We've all gotta eat.
You know, it's funny. I was just thinking.
Sailors are a lot like actors.
With them, it's always the next ship,
the next voyage.
With actors, it's the next part,
the next picture.
Always chasing rainbows.
Aren't you chasing rainbows?
I used to chase them. All around the world.
You're still chasing them
all over Hollywood.
Margaret, if you can forget that rat race
for one day...
You mean, give up my career?
It's no disgrace to be through in pictures.
You've got a lifetime ahead of you.
What will you do with it?
But what else is there for me?
You could go into real estate...
...or start a restaurant
or even be a saleslady.
But, Jim, I've never done anything but act.
All right, act. Play it like another part
at first. Give a performance.
I wouldn't know where to begin.
What are the names of some of those
fancy stores up at Beverly Hills?
Not Magnin's, not Saks.
Have everybody gloat over me?
Have everybody say
"There is Margaret Elliot."
No, thanks.
Well, then, get out of Beverly Hills.
That's not the world.
Long Beach has stores. Glendale. Pasadena.
And, it may surprise you, people too.
It's wonderful to hear you laugh again.
It's chilly.
I'll wake Gretchen up.

Wake up, darling.
We're in.
All right, let's try it again.
What's your name?
Margaret Morgan.
I suppose that's my real name too.
Miss or missus?
Well, which do you think is best?
I think missus. Husband deceased.
Experience?
Four and a half years at
Marshall Field's... in Lingerie.
Margaret.
You're okay.
And if you get the job, we'll celebrate.
I'll bet I know a place you've never been.
Fine. Won't you come in, please?
Name, please.
Margaret Morgan.
That's funny.
Your voice... You look like her too.
She's a movie star.
Margaret Elliot.
I get that all the time.
People have even come up
and asked me for her autograph.
Married or single?
Widowed.
My husband was killed in the war at Anzio.
- I'm sorry.
- Thank you.
Experience?
Well, I've had four and a half years
at Marshall Field's.
In Lingerie.
I think I'd like to have you
talk to our Mr. Cartwright, in Lingerie.
Marshall Field's.
That's good background.
Yes, I thought you would think so.
The young lady will show you
to Mr. Cartwright's office.
Thank you.
Here you are.

Jim, look. See that little sad-faced one?
That's our Mr. Cartwright.
I did have one bad moment when he said
he had once worked at Marshall Field's.
- You ever been in Marshall Field's?
- What else is there to do in Chicago...
...except take a bath at the Blackstone
or go to Marshall Field's?
He didn't ask to see references.
I had the most wonderful references.
After my husband was killed,
I had to sell the car.
They were left in
the glove compartment.
And the people who bought it
just disappeared from the face of the earth.
I gave one of my best performances
for that little baboon.
Listen to that sea lion.
Sounds like my brother-in-law.
What do you suppose they think about?
I wonder where people live
who work at May's Crenshaw.
One thing at a time. You might get fired.
As a saleslady? No such luck.
You sure you don't want a hot dog,
popcorn, anything like that?
If you like.
Thank you, madam.
Oh, dear.
I used to be able to wear things like this.
Let's take a little vow to lose 10 pounds
by Labor Day.
If we could do it together...
Misery loves company.
- Miss?
- Yes, madam.
How much is this negligee?
\$39.95. Isn't it lovely?
Let me see that.
- The black one?
- Please.
Yes, madam.
Well, what in the world

do you want with that?

- That's Margaret Elliot.

- It couldn't be. She's in jail.

No, some mystery man got her out.

I read all about it.

If it is Margaret Elliot,

I think it's a disgrace...

...for a respectable store like this
to hire a jailbird.

It's Margaret Elliot all right.

You can't fool me.

She was my favorite movie star.

I can't believe it.

Besides, Margaret was
much better-looking than her.

Take a good look, ladies...

...so there's no doubt.

It is Margaret Elliot, and it is a disgrace.

Margaret Elliot waiting on
a couple of old bags like you.

You can't talk to us this way.

I'll call the manager.

Call the manager. Call the president.

Call the fire department.

I won't be here.

I'm going back where I belong.

I am Margaret Elliot,

and I intend to stay Margaret Elliot.

- Miss Elliot.

- Hello, Jane.

Mr. Stone's been

combing the town for you.

- Tell him I'm here.

- Miss Elliot is here.

Why, Maggie. Maggie.

I didn't know

whether you were dead or alive.

I went to the jail.

Someone had bailed you out.

- Then you were at the jail.

- Yes. I had the money in hand.

- Didn't you know I'd come running?

- No.

Now, Maggie. Remember me?

I'm your friend.

- Then get me that part in The Fatal Winter.

- Now, slow down.

Where were you?

You had us running in circles.

I've been running in circles,

but not my circles.

I want you to take me to Joe Morrison.

I don't know.

This may not be the right time.

- Right time. You're stalling.

- Those stories in the paper, that's not good.

Joe Morrison is mad about publicity.

Well, it's an angle. I'll think it over.

Think it over? You're always

thinking things over. We're going now.

Maggie, you wait here.

When you go in, I want you
to go in right. No begging.

Maggie.

One more thing. Promise me.

Don't give Joe any of your ideas.

He has the ideas.

Joe.

Well, Harry.

- You want to see me?

- How's the picture going?

It may not make any money,

but it's a beautiful picture.

Come on up.

Well, my boy, which one of your unhappy
clients wants more money from me today?

Well, Joe...

...I'll let you off easy. I came

to talk to you about Margaret Elliot.

Terrible thing. Poor girl.

The competition, the pressure.

You and I go through it every day,

but we're tough.

We don't see our faces

enlarged a thousand times in close-ups.

- A good thing.

- They forget they're people.

They get up there at the top, begin to slip,

and they get panicky.

Now Margaret Elliot. I hate to see it.

Joe, if you'd give her a part, it would be one of the finest things anyone's ever done.

- Great publicity for you.

- No. No.

I like to see my name in the papers.

It sells tickets to my pictures.

I won't trade on the weaknesses and misfortunes of these poor people.

If I give Margaret a part, it's because she's right for it.

She asked me to talk to you about The Fatal Winter.

But, Harry, the girl in the story is 18.

- Barbara Lawrence will do it.

- Margaret optioned that book.

- It's important to her.

- Everything is important to stars.

What do we do with them or without them?

They're so naughty, like children.

At the same time,

they're so appealing, like children.

- Won't you just see her?

- Why? I've nothing for her.

She's right out there in the car. Just to be inside of a studio would buck her up.

Wait a minute.

Do you suppose she'd play the older sister?

It's not a big part, but it's strong.

Well, she ought to.

You can sell her on the idea.

Terrible to have to sell somebody something that's good for them. I'm used to it.

- Yes, Mr. Morrison?

- Miss Elliot is out front in Mr. Stone's car.

- Will you send for her, please.

- Yes, sir.

Just a minute.

- Ask Mrs. Morrison to come in, will you?

- Yes, sir.

My wife and Margaret Elliot

were very good friends.

Besides, my wife is more diplomatic

than I am.

Hello, Miss Elliot. Go right in.

Mr. and Mrs. Morrison are waiting.

Thanks.

How good to see you, Maggie.

Hello, Ruth.

- Joe.

- Margaret, you're looking wonderful.

- Well, thanks. Never felt better in my life.

- How's your lovely little daughter?

She's very well, thank you.

Well, the story editor is on his way in
with the test scene.

Test?

My dear, I know you've not needed
to make a test for a long time...

...but this role will be a departure for you.

She wants to make a test.

Don't you, Margaret?

Of course I'll make a test.

Ruth, how old do you see the girl?

Oh, 40-ish.

I see.

You want me to play the older sister.

Yes. If we like the test,
we'll build that part to take advantage...
...of your talent.

I see.

Well, that will be quite a challenge.

A very interesting experiment.

I'm a strange sort of recluse, see?

I suppose she's had a tragic love affair, but
that doesn't mean she can't look attractive.

Anyhow, I rented a small chicken farm
from some people named Garfield.

And I run it alone.

And there's been a murder, and I've seen it.

And the Garfield family is mixed up in it,
and I know it.

And one of the Garfield men
comes to tell me that I didn't see it.

And that's the test scene.

Cue me, would you, Jim?

Wait a minute.

I'm supposed to be scrubbing the floor.

There. Ready?

It says here, "He knocks on the door."

Knock, knock, knock.

Who is it?

"He enters, stands looking down at Sarah."

- Aren't you going to ask me to sit down?

- You can do as you like.

It says here she speaks in a sullen manner.

Jim, disregard the stage directions. That's one of the first things a real actress learns.

Who's directing *The Fatal Winter*?

A character named Keith Barkley from the stage.

Thinks he's slumming out here.

If I were you, Margaret,

I'd play along with him.

Jim, will you admit

I know more about Hollywood than you do?

Directors are like anybody

in the driver's seat. They wanna drive.

I've been managing directors for years.

Margaret, I don't wanna see you hurt again...

...like those two old bats

hurt you at the store.

But, Jim, that was this morning,

and I wasn't hurt. I was just plain mad.

You don't get mad unless you're hurt.

Jim, no lecture tonight.

Come on, let's start from the beginning.

Yeah, I'll take care of that. Sure. Yeah.

This way, Miss Elliot.

Will you bring me a glass of water?

Yes, ma'am.

- Miss Elliot.

- Yes?

Your glass of water.

Thank you.

- Yes?

- We're ready on the set, Miss Elliot.

I'll be there in just a moment.

- Hello.

- Good morning.

George, how nice.

- Stu. Stu, how's the family?

- Fine, thank you.

Hello.

Miss Elliot.

Miss Elliot,

you look a little young for this part.

Really? Women of 42 these days don't have to look ready for the old ladies' home.

Well, not the women we know...

...but this is a special case. She hasn't bothered to keep up her appearance.

- She avoids people.

- I've read the book, Mr. Barkley.

J.M. How sweet of you

to come down and see me.

- Good luck, dear.

- Thank you.

- Now, you two be nice to each other.

- I always get along with my directors.

- Sure. Sure.

- Are you going to watch the test?

No, I just came to wish you both good luck.

I never interfere on the set.

- Bless you.

- You and I know this is just a formality.

- Of course.

- Good. Good.

Good luck.

- Goodbye, J.M.

- Goodbye, dear.

Well. Thank you. Shall we rehearse?

Miss Elliot, Mr. Bailey is going to play the part of Jed.

- How do you do?

- How do you do?

Mr. Bailey's a good actor.

He worked for me in New York.

How nice. We can use good actors.

Let's run through it.

You enter this door, look around.

Make yourself at home,

as if you own the place.

All right, quiet, please.

This is a rehearsal.

Settle down, boys.

Action.

Who is it?

Aren't you gonna ask me to sit down?

You can do anything you like.

It isn't like you to pay a social visit,

Jed Garfield.

Cut.

- Anything wrong?

- Miss Elliot, you're too light.

This woman is sullen.

She's not flirting. He's her enemy.

If she wants to win her point,

she's got to use sex.

But this woman has no sex.

- Every woman has sex.

- But you're playing it like a young girl.

Do you really think so?

We've gotta get

this point straight.

Mr. Barkley, I've been in this business

a long time, and I know what I'm doing.

- I'm sure you do.

- George.

George, Ernie Laszlo used to

play the key light from this side of my face.

He used to say if I got bored

being a star, I could run the camera.

Would you bring me the mirror?

Dave, move that key light over there,

will you?

George, you see how much better that is,

don't you?

I see, Miss Elliot.

Thank you.

Well, shall we go on rehearsing?

No, we might as well shoot it.

All right, settle down, boys. This is a take.

Ready, boys? Roll them.

Speed.

Test, Margaret Elliot, take one.

Action.

Who is it?

Aren't you gonna ask me to sit down?
You can do anything you like.
It isn't like you
to pay a social visit, Jed Garfield.
- What are you doing here?
- You got it fixed real nice, Sarah.
- Real nice.
- I like things nice.
What do you want?
You used to be quite a girl.
You still think you are, don't you?
I still know what's right from wrong.
Do you think it right to tell folks you seen
him in the lane the night of the murder...
...when you know he wasn't
within 30 miles of there?
I was there, Jed Garfield.
You know I was there.
But if you was there,
what was you doing there?
None of your business
what I was doing there.
It's my business if you're trying
to ruin my brother.
Maybe I was thinking
of what he tried to do to me.
You don't know Lance when he's crossed.
I know Lance Garfield pretty well.
You don't know how well
I know your brother.
Cut. Print.
You mean I got it in one take?
- Was it all right?
- Fine, fine. Your fans would love it.
- Bless you. George, how did I look?
- You looked fine there, Miss Elliot.
Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you, all. Thank you.
Thank you, Mr. Bailey. See you soon.
I wish I could come and tell you all about it.
Fine. Oh, yes, he said it was fine.
The cameraman said I looked great.
Harry, I may have a surprise for you.
When the Morrisons see this test,

it might very well be...
...that I would play the girl I've always
wanted to play in The Fatal Winter.
Stranger things have happened.
Harry, Harry, I can't talk now.
I've got a million and one things to do.
Stop worrying. See you tomorrow.
Bye.
Jim? Jim?
Oh, Jim.
- I've had the most wonderful day.
- You struck oil?
They let me have a Cadillac on approval.
And I found the most wonderful house,
with a divine pool.
And you should see the clothes
I ordered. This is nothing.
Looks like plenty of nothing.
It's so wonderful to dare
to go and charge things again.
You wouldn't be a little charged yourself,
would you?
Luckily, my old publicity girl is available.
We've just mapped out
a sensational campaign.
I'm very good with publicity ideas,
you know.
Tonight we're going to Romanoff's
to celebrate my return to the screen.
- You got the part?
- Well, we see the test tomorrow.
- Then you haven't got the part?
- As Joe says, it's a mere formality.
You don't know what it means
to stand in front of a camera again.
You're going to have a little brother.
Well, are you going to take me out,
or do I have to get myself a new boy?
I know a quiet little place
over in Long Beach.
Quiet little place.
We're going to Romanoff's...
...and then dancing at Mocambo.
- Margaret.

Don't you want to go
out on the town with me?
- It isn't...
- Jim, don't make me beg.
I've begged so much.
All right, Margaret.
You can't go looking like that.
Haven't you anything to wear?
- I have a very nice suit.
- Well, put it on while I freshen up.
Margaret?
Margaret?
Jim.
Jim. Jim, wake up.

It's 1:

I only meant to close my eyes
for five minutes.
- You passed out on high spirits.
- But you promised to take me out.
Take it easy. If you'd gone out,
you'd have run into a lot of people.
What's wrong with people?
I like people.
Wait till tomorrow when it'll be definite.
Everything is definite.
I've told the papers, I've ordered clothes, I...
Are you trying to tell me I won't get this
picture? Who are you? What do you know?
This will put me back
where I was.
But why couldn't you have waited
one more day? What impelled you?
Impelled? Why...
Why, I...
Was I impelled?
You went out on a limb.
Yes, I did, didn't I?
It's probably all right.
I don't know.
Maybe I thought
if I made those promises...
...if I got myself involved...
...if I went out on that limb...

...it would be so
because I'd said it was so.
And then God couldn't be so cruel
as to...
To saw me down.
Do you suppose that was it?
Margaret...
Why do you keep torturing yourself
with all this?
You must know by now
you could stay here with me.
- Mr. Stone?
- Yes?
- Mr. Morrison wants you in his office now.
- Thanks.
- You heard. Can't keep Joe waiting.
- I'll have them run it for you later.
Won't you wait?
I'll be a few minutes.
- I'll want to see it again anyway.
- All right.
- Operator?
- Yes, Miss Elliot?
- Is my test ready?
- Yes, Miss Elliot.
You can go ahead.
Action.
Who is it?
Aren't you gonna ask me to sit down?
You can do anything you like.
It isn't like you to pay a social visit,
Jed Garfield.
- What are you doing here?
- You got it fixed real nice, Sarah.
- Real nice.
- I like things nice.
What do you want?
You used to be quite a girl.
You still think you are, don't you?
I still know what's right from wrong.
Do you think it right to tell folks you seen
him in the lane the night of the murder?
You know I was there.
- Run it again, will you?

- Yes, Miss Elliot.
I like things nice.
What do you want?
You used to be quite a girl.
You still think you are, don't you?
I still know what's right from wrong.
Do you think it right to tell folks you seen
him in the lane the night of the murder...
... when you know
he wasn't within 30 miles?
I was there, Jed Garfield.
You know I was there.
It's horrible! It's horrible!
But if you was there,
what was you doing there?
None of your business
what I was doing there.
Disregard stage directions,
disregard everything.
Jim told you.
Maybe I was thinking
of what he tried to do to me.
Well, he let you keep
this little piece of land.
- He could take it away.
- No, Lance wouldn't do that to me.
Shut up!
Shut up! You don't know anything!
You don't know how well
I know your brother.
Phyll?
Yes, Harry?
Phyllis, Maggie isn't feeling well.
Will you put her to bed,
tell Robert to bring her a tray?
I'm sorry, Maggie.
Let's see. I'll put her in Judy's room.
She's out in Palos Verdes for the weekend.
What's wrong with the guestroom?
I think she'll be quieter in Judy's room.
- Do you know where Mrs. Stone is, sir?
- She's upstairs.
The caterers would like to know
approximately when we'll start serving.

- Good grief.
- I'll be with you in a minute.
- The party. It went straight out of my mind.
- No problem. She'll be all right up there.
- I gave her a sleeping pill.
- You didn't leave any around?

What happened?

Well...

She was testing for the part
of the older sister.

She got it into her head that if she
played it sexy and tried to look young...
...they'd give her the other part.

Joe said that she was hopeless,
just bad, bad.

- Come on inside and meet her.
- Well, really I shouldn't.

Excuse me, please.

Thank you.

- I'm glad you came down.
- Dear, I've got to go.
- Stay for the party.
- I just couldn't.

It'll do you good.

Who knows? We've got a lot
of Hollywood brass here tonight.

Here's an old friend of yours.

Didn't Dave write a song for you once?

Hi, Margaret.

Remember?

Remember?

- Do I?
- Sure.

We did this for Night Club.

You know, I can still see it...

...you standing there
in that black sequined dress...

...your heart breaking
because the Mob had your guy.

- Hi, Margaret.
- Hi.
- How are you feeling?
- Fine, fine.
- Congratulations, Ethel, if it's true.

- What did you hear?
- That you got the part in The Fatal Winter.
- Morrison sent for me out of the blue.
Now I can get that tired old diamond clip
out of hock again.
Wonderful.
Well, Barbara Lawrence!
How did the preview go?
Terrific. Wonderful.
The audience loved it.
I signed a million autographs
by actual count.
They wouldn't let me go.
- That's quite a face.
- Who?
Margaret Elliot?
Margaret, my dear girl,
it's so good to see you again.
Harry, I own a wonderful screenplay
that she'd be great in.
You do?
That might save her life.
You realize he directed it all
with only a megaphone.
Margaret has faced some facts today.
Come on, let's talk to her now.
Thousands of extras.
And when the Red Sea parted...
Hold the Red Sea, R.J. Excuse me.
I don't think you know
Richard Stanley.
- No. Hello.
- Hello.
- R.J., you know Dick.
- How do you do?
Margaret, Mr. Stanley
would like to talk to you.
Let's find someplace
where we can hear ourselves.
Business, you know, R.J.
I wanted to talk to you about a script
I thought you might be interested in.
It's a Hollywood story,
but it might have happened anywhere.

The woman could be
the head of a department store...
...the publisher of a newspaper,
a politician...
...anything that generates drive.
Now, in my script,
she happens to be a movie star...
...so we can take advantage
of the bizarre atmosphere.
She's been on a sleigh ride,
but she can't face the fact...
...that it's over,
like half the people in this town.
How do you mean that?
Well, I'm not talking about
your dedicated artists.
Theirs is another problem.
This is your simon-pure movie star...
...like the ones that play it
24 hours a day...
...thinking of themselves
and what they look like...
...what kind of an impression
they're making.
Demanding, driving, ambitious.
For what?
Power, to stay on top.
And like all climbers that have reached
such a precarious pinnacle...
...they can't look down, lest they fall.
So they stand, clutching what they have...
...with fear, their lonely companion.
That's the character of the heroine,
if you can call her that, of Falling Star.
How do you get any sympathy for her?
Not sympathy, Miss Elliot, pity.
Profound pity, worthy of the gods.
This is a great tragedy.
Why, my character's denied
her birthright...
...the privilege and the glory...
...of just being a woman.
Gretchen, hurry.
Jim!

Come on.

Jim!

Oh, Jim.