

MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS**Audition Sides**

DAVID O. SELZNICK: *sharply cut, high-energy/manic, desperate producer (30s)*

BEN HECHT: *casual, dry, bitter writer, major chip on his shoulder (40s)*

SELZNICK:

You didn't read it?

HECHT:

No.

SELZNICK:

You didn't read it?

HECHT:

No.

SELZNICK:

You didn't read the book?

HECHT:

No.

SELZNICK:

You know what book I'm talking about?

HECHT:

Yes.

SELZNICK:

This book? Gone With the Wind?

HECHT:

I didn't read it.

SELZNICK:

Everybody in the world has read the book.

HECHT:

Not me.

SELZNICK:

You know about the book?

HECHT:

Gone With the--? Sure. I read the first page. Feh.

SELZNICK:

Feh--?

HECHT:

Moonlight and magnolias? Gimme a break.

SELZNICK:

You know why you're here?

HECHT:

You have a screenplay problem, you need the dialogue punched up, some character stuff fixed? Why else would you call me in?

SELZNICK:

I need a whole new scenario.

HECHT:

You've been shooting for three weeks.

SELZNICK:

I closed production down.

HECHT:

You did what?

SELZNICK:

I'm not shooting another foot of film until I have a scenario I can believe in.

HECHT:

You closed down the biggest movie in Hollywood history?

SELZNICK:

I'm in debt up to here, I could lose the studio, my kids' college tuition, the house—

HECHT:

You went into production without a screenplay?

SELZNICK:

I thought I had a screenplay. I've been working on it for three years!

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VICTOR FLEMING: burly, imposing, tightly wound, but dashing, director (40s-50s)

FLEMING:

I hate to kiss and run, David, whatever this is about, but I have to get back to The Wizard of Oz set. I have a hundred and sixteen munchkins dead drunk in the corridors or fornicating in the urinals of the Culver Hotel.

SELZNICK:

You're not shooting Wizard of Oz any more.

FLEMING:

I've got two weeks to go.

SELZNICK:

You're through with it.

FLEMING:

I'm being fired? For what? Because I slapped Judy Garland around that time—

SELZNICK:

You hit Judy Garland?

FLEMING:

Once. Once.

SELZNICK:

We're pulling you off Oz, putting you onto Gone With the Wind.

FLEMING:

Cukor's shooting that.

SELZNICK:

Cukor took five days to shoot the opening scene. His pacing's too slow. He's putting his own dialogue in. Margaret Mitchell's original name for Scarlett O'Hara was Pansy. That's how he's shot the movie.

Pansified. I know that won't happen with you. You may be a son of a bitch bastard—

FLEMING:

Thanks—

SELZNICK:

But you're a talented one—and Gable's a pal of yours, isn't he?

FLEMING:

Are you kidding? I taught him to be Gable. So what happens on Oz?

SELZNICK:

That's not your problem.

FLEMING:

It's my movie.

SELZNICK:

It was your movie.

FLEMING:

So I don't have to go back to the munchkins?

SELZNICK:

No.

FLEMING:

I can live with that. When we screened the dailies yesterday the little bastards were singing, "Ding dong the bitch is dead."

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BEN HECHT: casual, dry, bitter writer, major chip on his shoulder (40s)

VICTOR FLEMING: burly, imposing, tightly wound, but dashing, director (40s-50s)

HECHT:

I heard your big pal Gable had to be strong-armed into this movie.

FLEMING:

He's scared stiff of the role. Everybody's got it in their head that he is Rhett Butler. If he blows it—

HECHT:

Wasn't there a little—(he wiggles his hand)—Between him and Cukor? In a men's restroom? When he first came out to Hollywood?

FLEMING:

Let's not get into that, buddy. Okay?

HECHT:

Think you'll get on with what's-her-name?

FLEMING:

I imagine she'll do whatever she can to get me canned and get Gorgeous George back so if at some point I'm going to have to tell Miss Fiddle-Dee-Dee to stick the screenplay up her royal British ass, I'm ready to do it—

HECHT:

I guess that man who slugged Judy Garland—

FLEMING:

I hit her once—once! The question is, can you get the script done in a week? How many are you working on right now?

HECHT:

The new Marx Brothers movie... one for Warners—no—two for Warners— one for RKO—four—

FLEMING:

You can keep four screenplays in your head at one time?

HECHT:

You can do Wizard of Oz one day, Gone With the Wind the next?

FLEMING:

The hell with it—we don't have a screenplay—What about one of those bastards in the Writers Building?

HECHT:

One of those bastards in the Writer's Building?

FLEMING:

Yeah, one of those failed poets and college professors and dollar-a-line hacks who earn more in a week than an average Joe in a year and do nothing but bitch about it—

HECHT:

Bitch?

FLEMING:

How much are you getting for five days' work?

HECHT:

That's your business?

FLEMING:

Why not give somebody else a chance to butcher the script?

HECHT:

I'm here to butcher the book. I think we can trust you to butcher the script.

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DAVID O. SELZNICK: sharply cut, high-energy/manic, desperate producer (30s)

MISS POPPENGHUL: Selznick's assistant, terrific at her job, a step ahead of him at all times, graceful even when he blusters (20s-30s)

SELZNICK:

You know what a banana is?

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick.

SELZNICK:

The fruit?

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick.

SELZNICK:

You know what peanuts are?

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick.

SELZNICK:

I want bananas, lots of bananas, peanuts, get me peanuts. You know what I'm talking about? Bananas?

Peanuts?

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick. Miss Leigh has asked if she can go back to England while the movie is down.

SELZNICK:

The movie is not--! Remind Miss Leigh she's still under contract and must remain in Los Angeles until we resume production so Mr. Olivier should keep it in his pants a little longer.

POPPENGHUL: (her memo pad)

...in his pants...

SELZNICK:

By the end of this week Mr. Hecht will have a completed screenplay for us. You know what a typewriter is?

POPPENGHUL:

A typewriter?

SELZNICK:

We need a typewriter, paper, carbons, pencils, erasers, pens, ink, notepads, and we need them right away.

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick.

SELZNICK:

Don't forget those bananas. They're brain food.

POPPENGHUL:

Yes, Mr. Selznick.

SELZNICK:

Hold all my calls.

POPPENGHUL:

Mr. Mayer's on line one.

SELZNICK:

I can't talk to him.

POPPENGHUL:

Mr. Louis B. Mayer.

SELZNICK:

No calls.

POPPENGHUL:

Your father-in-law, Mr. Mayer.

SELZNICK:

I know who Louis B. Mayer is.

POPPENGHUL:

The father of your wife.

SELZNICK:

I get that.

POPPENGHUL:

Your wife Irene.

SELZNICK:

I know my own wife's name.