



The Odyssey and the Idiocy, Marriage to an Actor, a Memoir

Candace Hilligoss



I once was told there are three kinds of men I should never marry. Working actors. Non-working actors. Between jobs actors. That describes my husband to a T. For twenty years, I hung in with this guy. Supported him, massaged his ego, responded to his every whim, cried with him, rejoiced with him, and had his children. And, all the while, gave up my career in theater and film so I could stand by him until at last he knew success. And with his success came adulation, and with adulation, came sexual affairs, and with sexual affairs came divorce. If the marriage was hell, divorce proceedings were Armageddon. He did everything to intimidate me, belittle me and frighten me. Do I regret that I never married the boy back home? Absolutely not. If had stayed in Huron, South Dakota, I would have missed the experiences with: Marilyn Monroe, Mel Brooks, Vivian Blaine, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Daniel Mann, Jacqueline Onassis, Roy Scheider, Kurt Vonnegut and a summer living with Veronica Lake. Movie fans asked me to tell what happened behind the scenes in Carnival of Souls, a movie that became a cult classic and a success twenty years after it was made. Carnival of Souls is shown once a year in London as part of The British Film Societys repertoire that considers it as one of the 100 most important films of all times. My odyssey began when I attended the University of Iowa, Iowa City then, a year after graduating from The American Theatre Wing, I danced at NYCs Copacabana before gangsters and celebrities as one of the World Famous Copa Girls. At the same time, I was accepted into Lee Strasbergs acting classes. It was there I met my charming future husband. How could I ever have guessed that years later, he would file for a divorce during the longest Screen Actors Guild strike in the unions history. And that is just ACT ONE ? Author Bio: Candace Hilligoss is the Competition Coordinator for the Beverly Hills Theatre Guild--Julie Harris Playwright Award. This is the largest competition for new plays in the U.S. She is also familiar to audiences for the movie Carnival of Souls. After that she toured in a number of plays: A Streetcar Named Desire, Idiots Delight, The Boyfriend, and appeared at Arena Stage in Washington D.C. and at Olney Playhouse, Olney, MD. Playwrights Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee cast her in their Broadway play, Turn On the Night opposite Joseph Wiseman. For a couple of theaters, she repeated her Marilyn Monroe roles in Bus Stop and The Seven Year Itch.. Keywords Humorous Memoir, with Mel Brooks, Jacqueline Onassis, Veronica Lake, Marilyn Monroe & Strasberg, Carnival of Souls--Cult Film, No-Fault Divorce, Comparable to Nora Ephron partnered with Anita Loos.

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