

For two years, MM has confined herself to an "egghead" husband and an arty actors' school—but relax, most "improvements" are only in her imagination.

by Peer J. Oppenheimer

in her wake, but there remains only one Monroe.

Gossips say Marilyn's fan-fawning is just the dollars-and-cents canniness of a female with a natural intuition about business. It is true that part of Marilyn's success stems from her willingness to fight for and win roles that always show her to her best advantage.

Marilyn also knows how to publicize herself—invariably arriving late for an appearance, for instance—and how to cut down competition. This latter characteristic was illustrated by an incident in filming "Some Like It Hot." The beauties in the comedy, sent to a hairdresser for a bleach job, were instructed to keep their hair a shade darker than Marilyn's. When four of the girls bribed the operator for a shade like Marilyn's, the star had them marched back for a proper touch-up job.

Just as you form a picture of a scheming woman, though, Marilyn guilelessly explodes it. When a top New York columnist appeared on the set recently, Marilyn steered him to Joan Cane, former Miss New York and now a starlet, and urged him to do a story on her. Then Marilyn stepped aside, leaving the spotlight to the young hopeful.

Nevertheless, Marilyn's coworkers generally are hard on her. One says she made several attempts to strike up a friendship and got nothing in return but a blank stare. Others don't even attempt any familiarity because rumor says it's a sure way to lose your job.

MARILYN'S ATTITUDE is strange, since she obviously needs friends and affection. Her public hand-holding, hugging, and other adolescent demonstrations with Arthur Miller reflect this craving, but Marilyn is suspicious of people and their motives—which is understandable in view of her youthful experiences—and can't make even casual friendships very easily.

Those who have been "snubbed" claim another reason Marilyn is so uncommunicative is that she hasn't anything to communicate. "The girl doesn't have a brain in her head," a fellow worker said. "I wonder what she ever talks about with Arthur!"

But producer Helen Ainsworth, who handled Marilyn's career in its early stages, counters with, "Never underestimate her. The girl knows exactly what she's doing." If she does, she hides it skillfully. When I interviewed her, I asked if she had a head for business.

"Dear me, no," she sighed. "My lawyer takes care of my finances."

"He certainly must be a smart man," I said. "What's his name?"

"John Wharten," Marilyn replied. "Or is it Werten?" Her eyes grew big. "I'm not sure what his name is."

Sometimes you suspect Marilyn doesn't know her own name. Then you wonder if she isn't just

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