



Marilyn Monroe, The Final Days (documentary segment)

Level: High. Language: Personality, Feelings, Celebrity

A few months before Marilyn died, she sang Happy Birthday to President Kennedy. This caused many problems with her bosses in Hollywood. This documentary segment explains why. At the time, Marilyn was starring in a movie called "Something's got to give". It was being directed by George Cukor and also starred Dean Martin. It would be Marilyn's final movie.

Task: Watch the first seven minutes of this video. Answer the questions below. You may need to watch the video more than once. The numbers in brackets refer to the time in the video when you will hear the answer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKC71wJr4il&feature=related>

- a. (00.50) What did the letter from the studio bosses say?
- b. (2.00) How was Marilyn introduced when she finally arrived on the stage?
- c. (3.00) Why were the Hollywood studio bosses "livid" (very angry)?
- d. (3.55) What activity did Marilyn prohibit during filming on 21st May?
- e. (4.25) The following day, why did Marilyn refuse to film with Dean Martin?
- f. (5.00) - Why were the film crew willing to forgive Marilyn for everything?
- g. (6.50) Why was Marilyn happy with the photos that were taken of her in the swimming pool?

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**Answers:****a. (00.50) - What did the letter from the studio bosses say?**

The studio bosses told Marilyn that due to time restrictions for filming her new movie, she didn't have permission to go to President Kennedy's Ball - "we are behind schedule with our picture and we can not consent to or acquiesce in your absence"

b. (2.00) - How was Marilyn introduced when she finally arrived on the stage?

"Mr. President, the late Marilyn Monroe". This was a joke by the presenter because Marilyn had arrived late on the stage. Usually if you put "the late" before a person's name it means that you are talking about a dead person (e.g. "The late Elvis Presley used to live in Memphis"; "My late grandfather was a very interesting man"). The joke was a strange coincidence because Marilyn died a few weeks later.

c. (3.00) - Why were the Hollywood studio bosses "livid"?

Because Marilyn had publicly gone to the President's Ball and she had ignored their letter. "She just didn't have any sense of responsibility or any respect for them". They changed from seeing the problem as professional and they started seeing it as a personal one (they disliked Marilyn).

d. (3.55) - What did Marilyn prohibit during shooting on 21st May?

She let Cukor (the director) know that close-ups were out of the question. Close-ups are camera shots which are close to the actor's face. "No amount of make-up could hide her fatigue".

e. (4.25) The following day, why did Marilyn refuse to shoot with Dean Martin?

Dean Martin reported to work in spite of cold and fever. For the next three days, Monroe refused to work with Martin for fear of catching his cold".

f. (5.00) - Why were the film crew willing to forgive Marilyn for everything?

"Everyone was prepared to forgive Monroe's behaviour when word leaked out that she would be filming a nude swim-scene on May 23rd. The first ever by a major American actress"

g. (6.50) Why was Marilyn happy with the photos that were taken of her in the swimming pool?

Because "when it was all over she said, *Well this is knocking Elizabeth Taylor off the cover of the magazines* and indeed, she was on the cover of every magazine you can think of" (Marilyn was happy because she had replaced Elizabeth Taylor on the front of the magazines)

