

# De Dienes' Marilyn: A sensitive girl

**Andre de Dienes:  
Marilyn,  
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Fashion photographer Andre de Dienes' life changed forever in 1945 when he met a lovely young aspiring model named Norma Jeane Dougherty.

He instantly fell in love with her innocence and charm, and the two were briefly engaged.

They took many adventurous road trips together in those early years, de Dienes shooting Norma Jeane in every possible natural setting in his original, inspired style.

He soon built up a huge portfolio of stunning photographs of the smiling brunette which helped to launch her model career and, a few years later, a film career that was to make her a legend.

His entire relationship with the star, including many private moments shared only between the two, is detailed in de Dienes' secret memoirs, which were discovered when Monroe fans ravaged his home after his death in 1988.

The memoirs tell a beautiful story of love and friendship from the point of view of someone who knew Marilyn intimately; describing the transformation from Norma Jeane to Marilyn Monroe — the evolution of a sensitive, ambitious girl into a deeply troubled megastar — from an inside perspective, they shed light on a little-known side of Marilyn.

From their trip to see Norma Jeane's mother in a mental hospital to Marilyn's visit to his home a few days before her death, de Dienes recounts all of the emotional moments they shared.

The combination of de Dienes' memoirs and an extensive selection of his Monroe photographs makes for an unprecedented, personal exploration into the psychology, history, and iconography of the world's favourite movie star.

During her fabulous career, Marilyn dished out to the press everything about herself, everything about her childhood, everything about her marriage with her first husband, Jim Dougherty, but absolutely nothing, never anything about she and I.

Why? Because, what have happened between she and I were "secrets" she could not really tell, or did not want to tell. For her, her marriages and divorces, her illnesses, her problems at 20th Century Fox, all those things were big news for the press to write about day after day; but my loving her, and our get-togethers, and escapades, and all the rest, were impossible to tell.



Thus, remained unknown to the public. And I did not mind it at all, that our love remained anonymous.

My relationship with her were totally unknown. I enjoyed my privacy — to pursue my own career. Perhaps only once she have mentioned me in an interview.

But, since my stories are innocent revelations about the youthful years of two young people, I don't mind now, revealing a few funny stories what she never told to anybody.

It was her, who called me one day, in 1946, saying she had something important to tell me, and she asked me to come to her apartment that afternoon. And, of course, I went right away!

Once there, she came right out with what she had in mind. She told me she must have a new name, a professional name what will make her famous! I was thinking, and I said to her, 'Whatever name you will concoct, please, you must have the two M initials in it! And again, I reminded her the amazing bellringer in Transylvania who was all swept up in those initials, scribed them on walls, even caved on the entrance door of his house, probably while he was drunk.

Norma Jean was amazed, again, by my recalling that story to her. But before we could go on further — to elaborate what name could she invent for herself, there were hard knocks on the door of her apartment, and she worriedly asked "Who is it?"

“George” said the man’s voice outside. Norma Jean got very nervous right away, and she whispered to me “Quick, get under the bed! He is a very jealous man! He will hit you!” And without wasting a second, Norma Jean started to push me down, to hide myself under the bed! I cowered, forced myself to squeeze under the low bed. Then she opened the door, and George came in. There was a long conversation between the two, while I was literally holding my breath to be silent!

Thank God, I had a little wine before I came to see Norma Jeane (I always do, before going to see some ladies, where I expect adventures . . . Only a sip or two of wine, so that I lose my nervousness!) Thus I could endure the half an hour of ordeal of remaining motionless under the bed.

There was a vehement conversation between the two toward the end. “George” left angry, and shouting at Norman Jean. Then, total silence, and I came out from under the bed.

Hardly a few minutes passed, when George knocked on the door again.

This time, Norma Jean opened the door of the closet in the wall, and pushed me hard to hide behind her dresses. Again, I had to endure an interminable half an hour, or so, suffering, nearly suffocating by the heat of my own body created in that very small wardrobe closet. When “George” left, Norma Jean gave me a stiff drink and asked me to go home . . . She was unhappy, upset, worried. Why, or who that “George” was, I am not going to go into that here! Let it remain anonymous!

The only thing — funny — I want to recall — is that thinking “George” might come back again, I hid myself at the end of the corridor, pleasantly intoxicated by the drink Norma Jean gave me, and I was waiting and waiting for his return, hoping that by listening outside the door I could put together the entire issue what was in discussion between them beforehand, in the room, while I was under the bed and in the closet. But George did not come back. And I left.

That man, George, was a very respectable, middle-aged man. He did a great deal of good for Norma Jean in the early years of her career in the late 1940’s. It is possible that he was jealous, and possessive, but I am sure Norma Jean was exaggerating when she said to me that he might “beat me up” if he found me in her apartment. Norma Jean did not have “lovers” of that calibre.

*Please note that there are spelling and grammatical errors in this extract as it is Andre de Dienes’ personal account. Where the wording has been changed in pen by him, it has been included and the original text — including mistakes — used.*

