

Could you face it? By HUGH LEAMY

Even an Apollo or a Cleopatra might fail to pass a movie test. The lynx-eyed camera is a subtle worker, and it shows up many whose beauty is only skin deep

ON ANOTHER set a few steps away Richard Dix moved through a scene with the poise and ease of the experienced film player. Through the forbidding Positively-Keep-Out screens around our little group came the strains of gentle music that were the accompaniment of his work. But here, in a small space on a half-struck set, an obviously nervous, ill-at-ease girl laboriously performed the simple operation of opening a letter, while the camera clicked and the Kleig lights glared.

She was the center of attention. An assistant director called instructions to her in a low voice:

"Read it. Look away, as though something in it aroused memories. Drop it on the table."

She obeyed him: stiffly, mechanically. "Smile."

On the not unlovely but frightened face there appeared a sickly, forced grin. The girl in the chair seemed on the verge of bursting into tears or bolting.

"Cut." The camera stopped.

"Save the lights"—from the chief electrician—and the ghastly blue glare died.

The girl rose—more naturally now—and walked off the set.

"There," said the director, "it didn't hurt a bit, after all, did it?"

She laughed timidly.

"It was ter-terrible. I wouldn't take another screen test for a million dollars."

"Well, that particular girl won't have to. But she will face the camera many times more. For when the 300-odd feet of celluloid that comprised her test was reeled off in the studio projection-room skilled movie makers recognized instantly the fact that underneath the nervousness there was a girl with that universally sought quality, movie possibilities.

Posing for a screen test is the first step to film stardom. It may be the last. For the pitiless camera more often than not rejects as movie material subjects who, to even the most experienced of screen-trained eyes, seem perfect movie possibilities.

All beginners must submit to such tests. The screen aspirant eagerly seeks an opportunity to undergo one. But when you realize that each test costs the studio from \$75 to \$200 it is easy to see why producers are not overfree with the magic orders entitling one to probation filming.

In rare cases is influence sufficient to obtain a



Gilda Gray's light-blue eyes filmed miserably; shading made her an entrancing Aloma

Below: Beautifying W. C. Fields wouldn't have fited the old game



Below: "Never mind the eyes," boomed Sir Metro, and Norma Shearer went over big

Monroe



test. This happens a little more frequently than—well, than a bootlegger goes bankrupt. But not much more.

There's a girl named Jane Winton who is climbing up the film ladder today as a result of such an invitation. Adolph Zukor was lunching one day at the Ritz-Carlton in New York when he noticed a girl and an elderly woman at a near-by table. The girl was slim, with auburn hair and striking deep blue eyes. After studying her for a while Zukor sent his card over to her with a scribbled invitation to take a test.

Miss Winton had never until that moment thought of trying for the screen. But who can resist a golden invitation such as that? The test was a vindication of Zukor's camera eye, and Miss Winton has already played successfully in a number of pictures.

In somewhat different fashion Jesse Lasky not long ago stumbled on a young man who is well along his movie way

by now. Mr. and Mrs. Lasky were at a New York theatre one opening night, and between the acts the movie man went out into the lobby to smoke. He noticed a rather tall, dark young man lounging about and instantly spotted him as a movie type. But he hesitated.

Returning to his seat, he told Mrs. Lasky: "There's a young chap in the house to-night who'd be a winner on the screen. But I haven't any idea who he is, and I hesitate to approach him."

During the second intermission Lasky hurried to the promenade, and there he again saw the man who had caught his eye. He sought out the house manager and others of his acquaintance, but none

knew who the man was. At last, as Lasky was debating whether to take the bull by the horns, the young man walked up.

"Mr. Lasky?" he asked diffidently.

The movie maker nodded.

"Mr. Lasky, I—er—hope you'll pardon my approaching you like this, but I've been trying to see you at your office for the last two months, and I haven't been able to get past the gate. I'm awfully anxious—that is, I think I might film well, and I thought maybe you might be willing to arrange a—"

"Screen test!" boomed Lasky delightedly. "Jumping Jupiter, yes! Here's my card. Be at my office at ten o'clock to-morrow, and I'll go over to the studio with you myself."

Everybody Has a Chance

HERE again the screen test panned out favorably and another film find was recorded. The young man's name is Anthony Jowitt. You haven't heard much of him yet. He played in "The Coast of Folly," (Continued on page 49)

screen test. It may serve as entrée, but an aspirant must be at least a strong possibility before the camera grinds. However, having a wire or two pulled within the studio is one way of achieving the goal.

And not all those who use pull to obtain a screen test are failures. There is, for instance, the daughter of a Supreme Court Justice, who was "shot" the other day at a big eastern studio. She went there recommended and introduced by Will Hays, the czar of filmdom. So it's safe to assume that she would have been given her chance even if the odds were against her getting by the test. But in this case the girl had real screen possibilities, and the camera proved it. She may be a star soon after you read this.

If the gods are especially favorable, you may be spotted by an alert movie maker and invited to submit to a screen

Anabel adds a sultan to the lengthening list of men who have hoped to be her husband

Illustrated by
CHARLES
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"You must not be left alone now." The dark eyes, friendly, interested, were full on her

Sagging South

By SAMUEL MERWIN

THROUGH the shimmering hush of the China Sea the liner Sargasso, bound south to Singapore, plowed a lazy, opalescent furrow; seven hundred feet of sleek black hull below, piled-up white cabin structures above, funnels and masts towering over all, decks scrubbed to a shine, brasswork glinting in the merciless sunlight. A miniature cosmos, the Sargasso, her crew of hundreds of human creatures living and working in a well-oiled discipline of which the four hundred tourists, themselves settled long since into a routine of languid comfort, were only dimly conscious.

Emmy Bransfield, lying in her chair on Deck B, lifted her eyes from the closely scribbled volume in her lap and breathed "My word!" The book was Anabel Cayne's journal.

Who'd have suspected that demure child of plunging into such a series of adventures? Right under their noses too! She turned back to page one and with lifted eyebrows read what was inscribed there in a neat, square hand—"My Ten Commandments. . . 1. Smile, keep quiet, and never let a man guess what you're thinking. . . 2. Never show surprise. . . 3. Accept any amount of entertainment, but refuse expensive

gifts. . . 4. Never be shocked. . . 5. You may oppose a man on grounds of personal inclination or taste, but never on moral grounds. ["The little devil!" thought Emmy.] 6. Always encourage the man to talk about himself. He will." . . and on to No. 10: "When you're sure you've found the right man, forget the other nine commandments."

Emmy closed the book. Down along the rail the scandalous flapper Gertie Hubbard stood with the equally scandalous young Jimmy Belcher. If it had been Gertie, now, the thing would have been understandable, but Anabel Cayne! A twenty-four-year-old librarian person from Coventry, Mass., a Wellesley girl at that, to plunge with every cent she owned into this world cruise. Gamble on finding a husband before the ship should dock again at New York. Go after men as experimentally as a scientist goes after bugs. Bob her pretty hair, throw aside her flat shoes and long skirts for costumes as scantily modern as Gertie Hubbard's. Simply leap. . . Well!

A light step sounded up forward. Here she was, a provocatively attractive little person. Very trim, very quiet and cool. Looking a bare twenty. Who'd suspect? Emmy smiled faintly as the girl dropped into the next chair. It was going to be difficult to hit on just the right thing to say.

"HAVE I given you time to read it?" asked Anabel, smoothing her skirt over as much of her slim legs as it was designed to cover.

Emmy nodded reflectively. "Yes, I've read it."

"Well"—uncertainly was this said—"what do you think of me?"

"Mm. . . You've fooled me."

"In a way, I had to. At least, you can't really—"

"No, really, you can't. But"—Emmy chuckled softly—"my dear, the things you've been up to!"

"I know." Rueful, this. "But . . ."

"Imagine you, when I thought you safe in the ship, running off to a cock-fight in Panama with Hervey Westall,

actually on the point of eloping with him to Buenos Aires. My dear, that was touch and go. The toss of a coin."

"It's been pretty much all touch and go. I'm beginning to wonder if all life isn't. Just that."

"Well . . . of course" (again the chuckle; Emmy, all said and done, responded brightly to high color), "but all this other devilment! Packing your clothes to elope with that mad movie hero when I supposed you were only saving Gertie from him."

"It twisted around that way, but—"

"And working yourself up to the very point of marrying Mr. Ufford. Why—"

"That was pretty much your fault, Emmy."

"I may have advised you to look about among the older men."

"You egged me on."

"Well, but that Japanese." . . Emmy shivered.

"He killed himself for me," mused Anabel. Her eyes filled.

"And that adventure on the Yangtze River, when I dreamed you—"

"I've certainly dreamed since," put in Anabel. It was her turn to shiver. "I saw that man's head cut off."

"Turning to pleasanter subjects, there you were in Peking. . ."