

# The Lorraines in Hollywood



# The Lorraines in Hollywood

**M.B. Goffstein**



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To my cousin Dorey

With love



## **1953–1954**

Jane Lorraine looked stunning in a dark plaid dress with a deep leather belt and full gathered skirt.

“Are you a model?” asked the little girl staying next door.

“Yes,” said Jane.

“Can Tippi go to work with you?” asked the little girl’s grandmother.

“Not today.”

“I need some time to myself.” Dorey Deane muttered, ignoring the corpse on her neighbor’s walk and going back to her house.

•

“Call for you, Chief,” said a switchboard operator. “It’s the Governor.”

Margie Gainer was really the Police Chief’s secretary. “He’s on vacation,” she told the Governor.

“Get ahold of him for me.”

“He and Mrs. Conger are in the Rockies.”

## **M.B. Goffstein**

“When will they be back?”

“Not till September.”

“Then I’m counting on you, Margie,” he said, with his usual air of mystery.

•

Jane parked her car and ran to the studio.

“Relax,” said her best friend, Carole Camell. “The clothes aren’t here yet.”

“There’s a dead delivery man in front of our house! Faidoh called the police.”

“I wish we didn’t have to work,” Carole said. “I’d love to know if he was murdered.”

She was a tall elegant blonde, the sole support of her widowed mother.

Jane, a small brunette of seventeen, was the main provider for her family.

“They deliver the clothes we model!”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I love your dress.”

“I love yours!”

The stylist came in.

•

“What’s in the package?” the officer who had answered the phone asked Faidoh.

“I don’t know.”

“Didn’t you open it?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“Will you please send someone over?”

•

The phone operators gave Margie their notes, and she made the assignments.

“Works, take this.”

“Sounds like he or she was named for a fais do-do.”

“What’s that?”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“A Cajun get-together. The little kids sleep while the grownups dance.”

•

Faidoh combed his hair high off his forehead and into a neat DA in back.

“The officer wanted me to open the package,” he told Detective Works.

“Ricky isn’t an officer. He’s the chief’s nephew. By the way, are you related to Loretta Lorraine?”

“No.”

“Do you want to guess what’s in the package?”

“The murder weapon. How did Ricky know the delivery man was a Negro?”

“You didn’t tell him?”

“No. I’m part Negro myself.”

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“He said there were combs in the package,” Ricky told his uncle Chucky.

“He’s a liar,” Chucky said. “I watched you pack it.”

•

Loretta Lorraine hadn’t given Jane and Faidoh’s father time to change to civilian clothes before she told him they were moving to Hollywood.

He had served in the Marines for eleven years and sent home good pay.

He rose to the rank of first sergeant and served in the occupation of Japan.

One day a shopkeeper stopped him on the street and showed him some scrolls.

“You buy,” he insisted.

Cesar bought the seven scrolls and took them home on his transport.

•

## M.B. Goffstein

A year after they moved to Hollywood, Loretta got a small part in a picture.

A fool in a spotted ascot pulled her to him and crushed his lips to hers.

She pushed him away.

“Oh Chummie,” she cried, “can’t we be chums as your name implies?”

As Jane and Cesar left the theater, they saw her on “Chummie’s” arm.

•

Soon after Faidoh finished his hitch in the army, Cesar took the scrolls to Berkeley.

A bookstore owner told him they were poems by Po Chü-i, also called Po Lo-tien.

They were fine old copies of a selection of Po’s poems by a gifted calligrapher.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I don’t need to tell you the Japanese dug Po,” he said. “Dig *The Tale of Genji!*”

Young men in jeans and plaid shirts tried to teach Cesar Chinese. They also knew Japanese.

They said it was easier to translate Chinese into Japanese and then into English.

The young men were poets. They loved the mountains and Zen Buddhism.

•

Back in Hollywood, Cesar found a hut on a mountain owned by Mrs. Van Islip.

She would gaily call from her car, “Yoo-hoo! I brought a picnic!

“May I enter?” she would ask.

Wafting delicious perfume, she would tiptoe around as if in a museum.

“Tell me about this,” she would say. “There must be a story behind this.”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Yes, it’s my teakettle.”

•

“Girls!” The fashion editor clapped her hands. “The clothes aren’t here. I can’t use you.”

•

Margie got in the car with Vance, her driver. They were both graduates of Hollywood High.

Margie felt she hadn’t made much progress since then, as she rode around with Vance.

•

“Scram. Vamoose. Get lost,” Bronzino told the little girl from next door.

“Go home and tell your mother she wants you.”

“You don’t like kids?” asked Brisky.

Bronzino stared at him deadpan.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

When the body and package were removed, Brisky and Bronzino went next door.

“We’d like to talk to Thomas A. Garfield.”

“He doesn’t exist,” said the small blonde standing behind the screen.

“What,” said Bronzino. “Oh, I see. You’ve got a make-believe husband.”

She left and came back with a book by Garfield.

“You his secretary?” Brisky asked, impressed.

“No,” she said. “I’m Garfield.”

•

Vance and Margie parked in front of Faidoh’s house.

Works told them the package was addressed to a neighbor who wrote whodunits.

The radio squawked. The murder weapon was in the package. It was a tire iron.

## M.B. Goffstein

Margie hadn't said a word. She couldn't. She had seen movie stars in person.

Faidoh was a silver screen.

He kept smiling at her.

•

Jane and Carole got out of Jane's car and glided up the walk in high heels.

They made no noise. As models they first set down the ball of the foot.

They instantly clicked with Margie.

"Come in, we're starving," Jane said, and Margie went without a backward glance.

"How do you eat so much and not get fat?" she asked.

"Physical type," they said.

They asked her a million questions about the murder that she couldn't answer.

They thought she was adorable.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

•

Bronzino found an earring, a little guitar.

“Let’s see,” said Tippi.

He held it out on his palm then made a fist.

“I want it for my charm collection.”

“Can’t have it.”

“It was on my grass.”

“You call this grass?”

•

The earring belonged to Dixie Parsons, a dancer Faidoh met at an audition.

Brisky and Bronzino went to get her. She told them her roommate was missing.

She had tried to report it and the officer she spoke to on the phone joked about it.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Works drove her home and went through her roommate's belongings. He contacted Mr. Strahn in Boise, Idaho, and filed a missing persons report.

•

The next day after work, Jane and Carole went to Del's Livery to look around.

They left Jane's car some distance from the warehouse and walked down the deserted road.

There were several garages. The huge doors stood open. No one was around.

"Let's explore," Carole said. They couldn't see much. Everything was enormous.

They heard men coming, and jumped into an empty carton.

"That's one of them," a rough voice said. "Put that barrel on the truck."

They were hoisted up.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Oh no,” Jane whispered as the truck started backing out of the warehouse.

“We’re in a scrape,” Carole whispered back, her dark blue eyes gleaming.

“I’ve always wanted to say that,” she giggled, as they jounced over the road.

•

“You idiot,” Governor Folsom said. “You sent it to the wrong party.”

“Don’t look at me,” his brother Chucky said. “I gave the job to Ricky.”

“Ricky who?”

“Your nephew Ricky.”

•

“That’s right,” Rick said, “It was Barfield.”

“No, it’s Fairfield.

“Fairfield?”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“James Fairfield.”

•

Mrs. Scofield knew something was wrong when she saw a delivery man lying on her front walk.

He should have gone to the side entrance.

•

Dixie wiggled into tight jeans and a low-cut red top and rode over to Faidoh's.

He climbed on the back of her motorcycle and put his arms around her.

She liked the feeling, driving down Sunset.

When she stopped he got down.

“I have to tell you something,” he shouted, as her long red hair blew on the windy beach.

“I'm in love with someone!”

“Poo,” she yelled. “Kiss me.”

He refused, so on the worst night of her life she drove him home.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

•

It was late and Jane hadn't left a light on.

"Jane!" he called.

Her car wasn't in front.

He went to her room and was greeted by the little china dogs on her dresser.

•

As Melodie Conger slathered her toast with jam, she heard battering on her door.

"Who is it?" she asked her maid.

"It's the press, Miss. You'd better come."

Reporters shoved big square cameras in her face, exploded their flashes, and shouted,

"What's your comment on the arrest of your cousin and uncle by the FBI?"

"They were running a white slave trade! Ricky drugged the girls and Chucky shipped them in containers!"

**M.B. Goffstein**

•

Lucy Strahn started wearing the clothes her sister left at home.

It added to her parents' pain to see her from the back. Joy shot through them as they thought, It's Mary Ann!

•

After a scary ride, Jane and Carole spent the night crouched in the "barrel".

"I hope Faidoh thinks we had to work late."

Carole giggled. "If my mother calls the police, they'll think she ate a camel."

"Why?"

"Her name is Ada. When we lived in London, a bobby said, 'Surely not the whole thing?'"

They had to whisper. They could hear men talking and smell their cigarette smoke.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Many long uncomfortable hours later, they endured another bumpy ride.

To their relief they were unloaded at the shoot.

A dirty and disheveled but pretty young woman emerged from another barrel.

“Excuse me. Who are you?” asked the bossy New York fashion editor.

•

Detective Works placed a call to Mary Ann’s parents and put her on the line.

They ecstatically flew to L.A.

Lucy was planning to burn down the house or kill herself, or both.

The phone rang.

Could it be that cute reporter, Ted, who seemed to like her not just for the story of Mary Ann?

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

“How could you have let a strange man buy you a drink?” cried Mrs. Strahn.

“Didn’t you have change for a cup of coffee?”

He must have drugged it, because Mary Ann woke up in a cardboard container.

She heard two girls whispering, and that gave her hope.

•

“Papa!” cried Faidoh. “I’m so glad to see you! Jane will be home soon.”

“How is she?”

“Working hard.”

“I brought her something.”

He took an undershirt from his bag and unwrapped a china poodle wearing a beret and holding a painters palette.

“Do you think she’ll like it?”

“She’ll love it!”

“It belonged to Mrs. Van Islip’s daughter, Linda.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Is Linda . . . ?”

“Linda is in London. Isn’t it incredible? She studies at the School of Economics.”

He seemed infatuated.

“May I invite Mrs. Deane and her granddaughter for dinner?”

“If you like.”

•

Dorey declined. She was so snarled up, she didn’t think of sending Tippi.

She let a minor character take over a plot and now had to destroy half her manuscript.

•

“Papa! Who is this French poodle for?”

“It’s for you. Do you like him?”

“I love him!”

“Well, what is new?” asked Cesar.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Faidoh had helped the police solve a crime committed by Western Packing.

They hijacked a Del's Livery truck and killed the driver in their warehouse.

They packed the murder weapon in a carton that the dead man "delivered."

They had sent it to the wrong address, so they killed another Del's Livery man.

Jane gave her poodle some gumbo.

•

Faidoh answered the door, leaving his house guest, Bobby Soda, waiting.

He came back saying he was getting two dollars for a Bible salesman.

Faidoh was putting the Bible in a drawer and taking out a book he had bought his father when Jane glided in.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

She looked enchanting in a white shirt, black Capri pants, and ballerina slippers.

She and Carole had the day off and were going to meet at the drugstore.

The salesman had looked familiar.

Before Faidoh could stop Jane, she opened the door and screamed.

Bobby came running.

He wasn't an actor, so they didn't have to watch him decide how to take it.

"Is that my Dad?"

"Yes."

"It's okay. I don't even know him.

"I wonder where he's been all this time. Maybe he was in the Service.

"I'd like the book you bought off him. I'll pay you back."

Faidoh was making a phone call.

## M.B. Goffstein

He put the phone down so Jane could call the drugstore and have Carole paged.

Bobby packed his few clothes and toiletries and put his guitar in its case.

•

“It was Faidoh Lorraine!” said the operator.

“Call him back!”

•

Jane and Bobby leaped into her car and sped away as the phone rang.

•

Brisky and Adams pulled up at Faidoh’s house followed by an ambulance.

“Where’s Bronzino?” asked Faidoh.

“Dead.

“This may be the b----- who shot him. If the bullet is Bronzino’s, I’ll be relieved.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“What happened?”

“Bank robbery.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Yeah. It’s a private bank. They’re keeping it quiet. They aren’t insured.”

Adams came toward them, saying, “His foot prints go around the house.”

“Get the photographer,” Brisky said. “It looks like he was going to rob you.”

•

Brisky and Adams went next door.

“Remember me?” Brisky asked the golden-haired lady who lived there.

Dorey Deane wrote the *Jack Danger* mystery series. Brisky had some questions for her.

“Danger’s a New York cop. You live in Hollywood!”

## M.B. Goffstein

She just threw in characters who had worse problems than the protagonists.

“You got a PI living next door,” Brisky said. “You can get ideas from him.”

“I don’t like real crimes.”

“You’re breaking my heart!”

“They don’t make sense. Give me fiction. Cardboard characters. That’s what I like.”

Brisky and Adams thought she was fascinating. They had to tear themselves away.

•

Dorey was exhausted. She liked people but got tired of talking to them.

She had told Brisky and Adams that when she was a child, she and her cousin made up stories.

Writing is like that, she said.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Later, one or more themes began to emerge, and even the plot made sense.

“You make the stories up?” asked Adams.

From then on, Dorey only spoke to Brisky.

“I think she likes you,” Adams said as they went back to the car.

•

In *Danger on Mott Street*, Danger watches a young woman choose a souvenir.

There are many of each kind.

She takes one to the counter. The storekeeper gets her an identical one.

She says, “I want that one.”

“Better,” he says.

While this is happening, Danger takes one.

Throwing down money and saying he’s in a hurry, he switches it for the one the girl chose.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

It is a carved cork landscape sandwiched in glass, framed in black, and glued to a wooden stand.

•

When Dorey had trouble with a manuscript, she would discover missing parts of the plot.

It might be no more than a loose piece of cork.

The Chinese shopkeeper might simply want the girl to have a nice souvenir.

The girl might be an artist who liked the look of a damaged cork landscape.

Jack is curious about her and why she wanted the one he now owns.

He waits for her.

•

Dorey received letters from New York intellectuals complimenting “Tom” on his prose style.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

A famous woman writer wanted to meet him at the Algonquin Hotel in New York.

•

Works opened the Bible. “To Paul Soda, Good luck, the Yazoo City Orphanage.”

“Did you know Soda?” he asked.

Faidoh carefully scratched his head.

The little California bungalows were practically on top of one another.

Works saw one slat of a closed Venetian blind tilted up across the street.

“Who did your sister take off with?”

“My cousin Bobby Lorraine.”

Works saw that Faidoh hated lying.

He was looking at the ground. Then he stooped and picked up a key to a bus or railway station locker.

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

Vance pulled up behind Works' car.

Faidoh quickly combed his hair.

"Miss Margie!" he cried, opening her door.

•

"I feel very flat," the first robber said. "We should be living it up."

"We don't have the money."

"You don't have to tell me!"

"We can't live it up."

"It's in that locker."

"Paul's got the key."

"I'm so sick of you," the first one said.

"Likewise."

"But I can't leave, in case you're holding out on me."

"Same here."

"I wish I could go to the police."

"Ditto."

"They should protect everyone."

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“They tried to shoot us!”

•

“Where to?” asked Vance.

“Train station.”

Mid-morning, Margie liked to have one of the restaurant’s sticky rolls.

She’ll butter it, too, he thought.

•

“Do you like Los Angeles?” Jane asked Bobby as they sped along.

“Yes’m.”

“It’s so clean and pretty, and the weather’s always nice.”

“Yes’m.”

“Faidoh wants to know if you would change your name to Bobby Lorraine.”

“I always wisht I was his son.”

“We’re the same age, Bobby. You’re only two years younger than Faidoh.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“You could be our cousin.”

They came to a road marked “Private No Trespassing,” and Jane parked the car.

“Let’s have our picnic,” she said.

She gave him a waxed-paper wrapped sandwich and took one herself.

She said, “In movies, girls go to restaurants and don’t eat the food on their plates.”

You idiot, she berated herself. Bobby had never been in a restaurant.

She handed him another sandwich but didn’t eat another one herself.

“Get your things,” she said, when he had finished. “We have to walk up the mountain from here.

“The owner can drive but everyone else has to walk.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“There’s our mark,” the first robber said into the second robber’s ear.

Though they both stank, the second robber flinched.

Cute, some of the women thought, as Margie went to the phone booth.

She shut the door.

“Lucille,” she said, “we’re making two collars. Send Brisky and Adams.”

•

“How’s the career?” asked Works.

“I’m not auditioning any more, if that’s what you mean. I like being a PI.”

“I hear you solved some cases.”

“I just found some lost things and settled disputes, nothing very big.”

“It’s satisfying,” Works said.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“I’m trying to remember if you told me how Bobby Lorraine is related to you.”

“He’s my cousin.”

“He came to work for me. He thought I’d be a famous singer by now.”

“You can trust me,” Works said.

“What do you mean?”

“I’ll help him change his name. He shouldn’t be known as the son of a vicious criminal.

“Soda’s wanted for armed robbery in Florida, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas.

“Did he ask you for help? Did he try to see his son and take him hostage?”

•

“What do you want me to do?” Adams asked Brisky.

“Stay out of the way.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He had taken her as his partner because he was upset about Bronzino.

•

A young girl strolled into the station and stopped in front of the suspects.

“Now, where did I put my money?” the dumb girl said.

One of the suspects grabbed her bag.

She turned into a pinwheel, clipping them with every whip of her blades.

•

“Where’d you get the dress?” asked Brisky.

“I kept it for a disguise. Now that I have a job, I can buy nice clothes.”

“It’s your first day as a rookie! You didn’t make detective.”

“Will you open locker two-oh-three?” asked Margie. “They’re staring at it.”

He threw the picks to Adams. “Here you go, hot shot.”

## M.B. Goffstein

“I don’t know how to do it!”

He did something, the door opened, and there were the sacks of money.

•

Brisky’s guts were roiling.

He should have taken the money and run. Vance would have shot him but might have missed.

•

Ah, cheese, thought the robbers, though they were secretly glad.

There was cruelty in the love the police had for their counterparts. Prisoners weren’t allowed to read the papers, so they didn’t know Paul Soda was dead.

•

Brisky drove wildly, his blood boiling. He almost hit a pedestrian and was sorry he missed.

He was going ninety miles an hour, smiling grimly as cars pulled over.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

•

“I didn’t mean to upset Brisky,” Adams said, waiting to ride with Vance and Margie.

She had taken her dress in a brown paper sack that Brisky thought was her lunch.

•

Faidoh answered his door and saw the well-groomed head of his mother.

“May I come in?” she asked.

After a few minutes of small talk, she said she had something to tell him.

“When you were little, Bobby’s daddy wasn’t in the army, and I thought he felt ashamed.

“I tried to make him feel better.

“I’m sure you don’t remember saving my life by running to a neighbor for help.”

**M.B. Goffstein**

Faidoh had never forgotten his terror or forgiven her for endangering him and Jane.

“I saw him a few days ago. I had a doggie bag from the Brown Derby.

“He didn’t look well, so I gave it to him.

“I told him Bobby was here.”

•

“What do you do all day?” asked Bobby.

“I look at the clouds and think about poems by Po Chü-i.”

Cesar opened his skeletal copy of *More Translations of the Chinese* by Arthur Waley and read to him:

THE PINE TREES IN THE COURTYARD

Below the hall

The pine-trees grow in front of the steps,

Irregularly scattered,—not in ordered lines.

Some are tall and some are low—

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I got a book,” Bobby interrupted him. “Faidoh give it to me. Is that story in my book?”

He handed him *170 Chinese Poems* by Arthur Waley—the book Cesar craved!

Bobby grabbed it back, saying, “Don’t hurt it!”

•

“Papa!” cried Faidoh.

“Where is Jane?”

“Working.”

“Pour us out a little wine, and I will tell you a story. I knew Paul Soda from the bayou.

“He came on the mountain and held a gun on me. He said he needed a hideout.

“I shot him with the service revolver I bought in Hawaii.”

Cesar put two guns on the table.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“I was going to come and tell you next day, but when I woke up he was gone.

“Then Jane came with Bobby and the sandwiches and cookies you made.”

•

Bobby was going to enlist.

“Why don’t you leave your book here, where it will be safe,” Cesar said.

You got to be kidding, thought Bobby.

**1955**

Jane combed her bell of brown hair and colored her lips Adorable Red.

She wore a dark plaid dress by Claire McCardell with a deep leather belt.

*Dogs As I See Them* by Lucy Dawson lay open on her bedspread.

She dropped the lipstick in her bag.

As she went out the door of the bungalow, she called, "Oh, Faidoh, you've got company!"

Then she jumped in her car and drove to the drugstore to meet Carole.

"Sorry I'm late," she cried. "There's a dead woman in front of our house!"

"Remember the delivery man?"

"Yes, and the Bible salesman."

They wondered who it was this time.

•

## M.B. Goffstein

Faidoh was examining the corpse's footwear and wondering the same thing.

There were taps on the toes of the worn leather soles. He noted the small economy.

A car stopped, the door slammed, and Detective Works came up the walk.

"When were you going to call me?" he asked.

The small yards made a mélange of grapefruit, lemon, and orange trees.

Two officers escorted a woman wearing a kimono and marabou-trimmed mules across the street.

Works recognized the black-haired, silent film star.

"Miss Laing," he said, "please tell us what you know."

She screeched, "I seen her go up the walk an' I seen two men follow her."

"Did she have an appointment with you?" Works asked Faidoh.

"No."

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“What time was that?” Works asked Miss Laing.

“Around midnight.”

“Did you see any cars?”

“She came in that car over there, and the two men came in a black car.”

“Can you be more specific?”

“No.”

“Why didn’t you call then?”

“I didn’t see nothin’ wrong.”

Works turned to Faidoh and winked. “So you were asleep when it happened.”

“Yes,” he said. “I’m sorry for the poor lady.”

•

When the officers escorted Miss Laing back to her cottage, she was excited.

She went to her bathroom and looked at herself in the mirror.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

To her own eyes she was still beautiful, but why was her hair so flat?

“I’m scared to get old and ugly,” she whispered.

•

The dead woman, Mrs. Van Islip, was a rich widow who owned a mountain.

The money was hers, not her husband’s.

The police thought she knew she was in trouble and was going to hire Faidoh.

They spread out at the airport, eager for her son and daughter to arrive.

As Mark and Linda flew to L.A., their mother was making the trip to heaven.

She kept wondering if she should go back and tell the police to stop wasting their time.

She knew that her children loved her and were very upset.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Judging by the police handling her case, the lower classes were obsessed with money.

She had wanted to give Faidoh money for Cesar when she was killed by two strangers.

•

Jane and Carole drove up.

“Where’s the body?” asked Carole.

“It’s gone.”

They hadn’t taken two steps on the polished red tiles when Faidoh came out to the hall in a gray shirt with a band of pink diamonds across the chest.

He held the door for Chief Margie.

In her white high heels she came to Jane’s chin and Carole’s shoulder.

“See ya’,” she said, clomping out to the street.

•

Margie was dreamy as she got in the car.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Where to?” asked Vance.

“Grocery store.”

She sighed thinking of Faidoh in his pink and gray shirt, brown pompadour and DA.

He was a doll.

•

She selected tomato soup, milk, bread, and cheese, and took them to the checkout.

Suddenly she turned and smashed the can into the throat of the man behind her.

“Do you still want the soup?” the cashier, Margie Beechnut, asked Margie.

“Yes,” she said.

Margie Beechnut rang her up.

“I’m going to make a toasted cheese sandwich and cream of tomato soup.”

She went to the window and waved.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I thought I’d have a TV dinner after being on my feet all day,”  
Margie Beechnut said.

Vance came in and handcuffed the man.

“What’d he do?” he asked.

“He tried to take my bag.”

“I didn’t see that,” Margie Beechnut said.

“Sure you did,” said Vance

•

After they left, Margie Beechnut thought, I have to wash my hair  
and do my nails.

I’m glad I have my new Ship ‘n Shore blouse and navy blue suit and  
pumps.

I wish I had a new handbag.

She saw herself approach the bench, raise her right hand, and take  
the oath.

“Mmf! Mmf!”

A gag went over her mouth.

**M.B. Goffstein**

Two men tied her wrists and carried her out to a car.

“I hate leaning over the seat,” the one tying her ankles said. “I feel like I’m gonna puke.”

Lying on her side, facing the back upholstery, Margie Beechnut pictured a navy blue handbag.

•

“Chiclet?”

“Nah.”

“You sure?” The first kidnapper shook some into his mouth and crushed the candy coating. “Wha’d you get?”

“Nothin’.”

“You could of had a candy bar.”

“I know. I’m stupid.”

“I feel bad you don’t like Chiclets.”

“Don’t worry about it.”

“I won’t. Strangling Mrs. V. and leaving her in that bush wasn’t too hard.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Yeah.”

“This one’s more of a problem.”

“Why don’t we drive around till dark and take her to the same house?”

“Ha, ha, ha, ha!”

Margie Beechnut tuned out again as they discussed ways they could kill her.

•

“Hello, Rita?”

“Yes?”

“Margie was kidnapped!”

“That’s terrible.” She bit into a candy. He heard the chocolate shell crack.

“Mm!” she said.

“So I won’t be home for dinner.”

“Why not?”

“I have to help find her.”

## M.B. Goffstein

“What’s more important, her or me? Now aren’t you glad I’m not your cashier?”

•

L.A. is a city of stories. Everyone wants to write, direct, and act in stories.

Above all, they want to live their own stories as writers, directors, designers, and actors.

They bring their talent and beauty to L.A., the city that believes in stories.

•

Jake Hirsh is wooing top model Jane Lorraine to star in his next production.

Louella Parsons always got things wrong, Jane’s mother thought, putting down the paper.

She finished dressing with her usual care and took a series of buses.

“Name,” said a studio policeman.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Miss Lorraine.”

“Go right ahead.”

Jake Hirsh threw open the door of his office only to be disappointed.

Loretta graciously thanked the guard who escorted her from the building.

Her children had invited her to live with them, and it wasn't their fault she didn't drive.

But she blamed them as she stood in the hot sun waiting for the bus.

•

“Denny Trotta's a real sweet guy, givin' us two jobs.”

“Yeah.”

“It's all who you know.”

“We don't know no one.”

“It's all who Denny Trotta knows.”

“He's in the big time.”

## M.B. Goffstein

•

Margie Beechnut had enjoyed chatting with two big stars of Hollywood High.

Her employer, Mr. Goodman, was Homecoming King the year before Vance.

She was in the big time.

She decided to enjoy her fantasy: Rita leaves Mr. Goodman for another man . . .

•

Brisky pulled up next to the kidnappers' car. "Park at the curb," Adams instructed the driver.

"Oh, baby! You like me or both of us?"

He pulled a gun, so Brisky shot them.

•

"Get out!" Denny Trotta screamed with his damaged vocal cords.  
"Guard! Get her out of here!"

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I probably saved your life,” Margie said. “One of your buddies is dead.”

“Oh, no,” he cried, “not Segal! You robbed us of our dream. We was gonna be rich and make up for all the bad that happened when we was kids on the south side of Chicago.”

•

“Where to?” asked Vance.

“Home.”

“No groceries today?”

“I have the stuff I bought last night.”

“So you’re going to have a toasted cheese sandwich and tomato soup.”

•

“Let’s go and find out if Goodman’s neighbors heard anything,” Brisky said.

“Be good,” Serena Adams told Margie Beechnut.

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

Knock, knock.

“Who’s there?”

“Open the door, Rita. We did your job. Denny Trotta wants his money.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” she said, sounding nervous.

“A special garbage pick up.”

She opened her door.

“Surprise, Rita. I’m a cop.”

“I want to call my lawyer.”

“You want to call Segal?”

“Is the job really done?” she asked, putting her hand in her bathrobe pocket.

“What job is that?”

“You know.”

Brisky heard a C note.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He put out his hand and she paid him as Adams came around the corner.

•

“It wasn’t my fault,” Margie Beechnut said. “I’d never leave my counter.”

Goodman took her in his arms, crying, “Margie, let me make it up to you!

“I’ll divorce Rita and marry you. Together we’ll care for your mother.

“Wouldn’t it be nice to have a little baby to show her?”

•

Jane had to work late, so Faidoh crossed the street and rang the bell.

Miss Laing came to the door wearing her mules and clutching her kimono.

“Yes?”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“I met you with Detective Works. I was wondering if you like catfish.

“I fried some for dinner. If you don’t have other plans, will you share it with me?”

“Ain’t it terrible we had a crime,” Miss Laing screeched. “I been scared to go outside!”

“Yes, ma’am,” he said, holding her elbow and looking both ways.

“I told you everything I know.”

“That’s not why I invited you!”

•

They sat down at the table and clinked glasses.

“Don’t you have a girlfriend?”

“No, Ma’am.”

He had never seen anyone eat so fast. He was afraid she had been starving.

“Can I give you a helping to take home?”

“All right.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“The girl I like is called Margie. She’s so cute. She’s the Police Chief’s secretary.”

“I seen her,” Miss Laing said. “I thought you was going to say you like your sister’s friend.

“Even she ain’t as pretty as your sister, who I saw in the paper Mr. Hirsh is going to make a star.

“She’s the type they want these days. They call it The Girl Next Door.”

•

There was a knock on Cesar’s door.

It was Mrs. Van Islip’s lawyer, Segal.

Segal said, “I want you off my property now.”

Cesar packed his books, scrolls, teakettle, and stone Buddha, and started down the mountain.

The books were gifts from Mrs. Van Islip. She had loved buying them for him.

## M.B. Goffstein

The bookstore owner always said something to her with a little innuendo.

She was fascinated by the way in which in Cesar's hands a new book lost its jacket and became grimy, twisted, warped, creased, loved.

•

On his long trek down the mountain Cesar recited one of Waley's translations of Po Chü-i:

I have never battled to buy a fine house,  
I have never fought to own great lands.  
What I had to fight for, having got a place of my own,  
Was to sit tight for more than ten years.  
I turn and look at the houses of the Top Clans  
Lined up in the heart of this great town—  
White walls flanking red gates,  
Splendidly staring across the wide streets.  
Where are the owners? All have gone away . . .

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

It wasn't until noon the next day that he arrived at Jane and Faidoh's door.

•

"I'll just familiarize myself with Mrs. Van Islip's will before the kids get here," Segal said.

"Oh, my goodness!"

"Wha'?"

"I'm so amazed and touched!"

"Wha' happened?"

"Ilah Van Islip left me her mountain!"

"She couldn't have." His secretary cracked her gum. "You're her lawyer."

"Remember the document you witnessed that was covered by a blank page so we couldn't see it?"

"That was the mountain?"

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Her name will live forever in my housing development on Islip Mountain.”

“That’s a good one.”

•

“Papa!” cried Faidoh.

Just then Miss Laing came up the street.

She had dressed, gone out, and was coming home carrying a grocery bag.

Cesar dropped all his possessions and ran to help her.

He had seen her in silent films when as a boy his father took him to town from the bayou.

Her screech was music to his ears. It sounded Chinese.

As the poet Li Shang-yin said, “To see her shadow, to hear her voice, is to love her.”

•

As Segal rose to greet Mark and Linda, he felt like their elder half brother.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Under the terms of the will he was supposed to send them the interest from their trust funds.

“My condolences,” he said, and tried to kiss Linda, who backed away.

He heard a man ask for him.

“You can’t go in.”

Segal was shocked that his secretary would defend him.

“Why not?”

“He’s reading a will.”

Mark and Linda looked fascinated.

They don’t care, Segal thought. They’re rich, protected from the world.

It don’t matter that they aren’t good looking and have lousy personalities.

He was ready to take out his gun and shoot them when Detective Works walked in.

Linda took the will and started reading.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“This is wrong,” she said. “Mother willed the mountain to Cesar Lorraine.”

“His son’s a Private Eye,” Works said. “Your mother was killed on his property.”

Segal was stunned.

But wait, he thought. It don’t look good for the PI. Beautiful, thought Segal.

As they led him away, he thought, They’re so rich, they don’t care if their mother gives away a mountain!

That’s not all!

They want to be sure the right person gets it!

•

“You know, Faidoh, I like the work you chose.”

“You do?”

“Pour me out a little wine, and I will tell you a story.

“In my cabin I want to light my stove, but there are no matches. All night I shiver.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Oh, Papa, no!”

“That’s nothing. Next day I go down the mountain and buy matches.

“A week later, I put my hand in my pocket and find matches that were already there.

“The question is, What if you have something and you don’t know you have it?”

“Papa, I have something to tell you.

“What is it?”

Mrs. Van Islip left you the mountain in her will.”

•

The story hit the papers.

Cesar’s stern visage appeared on magazine covers. The public couldn’t get enough of him.

Miss Laing became famous again due to his reference to her “moth eyebrows.”

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

A German shepherd puppy, son of champions, was delivered to Jane.

The card said,

I was going to send you flowers.

J. Hirsh.

She called him, trembling with emotion.

“Change your mind?” he asked.

“No, I’m sorry.”

“Enjoy,” he said coldly.

The puppy’s ears flopped. His legs were as thick as two-by-fours.

He had tiny sharp nails and teeth.

His little eyes were intelligent.

He squatted and wet the floor.

“No!” said Jane. She scratched the door and took him out. “Good boy!”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The puppy thought, This makes sense. Everyone has to live here.

He chewed everything in sight. She named him Chewy, after Po Chü-i.

•

Margie Gainer took Faidoh to her high school reunion.

Margie Lee, a singer, walked over to the bandleader and introduced herself. There was a drum roll.

•

“Ah liked your singing,” Faidoh said.

He was gorgeous!

“What do you do?” asked Margie Lee.

•

Jane and Carole, wearing inconspicuous dark clothes, and Chewy, “his rough coat suiting his long nose,” as the poet Li Ho said, were sneaking around outside.

They were looking for a window so they could see Margie and Faidoh dance.

**M.B. Goffstein**

Then they were going to a drive-in.

Jane said, "We can have French fries and Cokes. Chewy is vegetarian. He growls if I eat meat."

"You shouldn't let him push you around," Carole said.

"I want him to push me around. I love that he loves me and tells me what to do."

She felt his cold nose in her hand.

They were coming back to the parking lot when they heard two men talking:

"I'll take care of Margie."

"Okay. I'll drive."

•

Dessert plates were cleared away.

The chairman tested the microphone. "Testing, testing. One, two, three, four."

The audio screeched.

"Welcome Class of 1950!"

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Carole entered the gym and calmly looked around.

Everyone wondered who the beautiful girl was who beckoned to Margie and Faidoh.

They followed her out to the hall. "You have to leave," she said. "Jane is at the front entrance."

Carole's husband, Jake, was so in awe of her all he did was tease her mother.

He asked Ada Camell how she seasoned the camel.

Carole was seeing a psychoanalyst because she didn't understand him.

He was the one who needed analysis!

He was shy and insecure, not cold and haughty as many people believed.

•

"I wonder if Papa is awake," Faidoh said as they neared the two bungalows.

**M.B. Goffstein**

Their neighbor Dorey Deane had moved to Michigan, and Cesar bought her house.

The silent film star Erna Laing no longer lived across the street.

Cesar's lights were on. He was reading a poem by Po Chü-i, translated by Arthur Waley:

ON HIS BALDNESS

At dawn I sighed to see my hairs fall;

At dusk I sighed to see my hairs fall.

For I dreaded the time when the last lock should go . . .

They are all gone and I do not mind at all!

He had almost completed one year of his seven-year contract with Paramount.

To please him, they were making a film of *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i*.

Honey Levine and Honey Shapiro had read the book.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Po Chü-i and Yüan Chên were hardly ever together!” they exclaimed.

“Ch’ang-an moon, same-same” the Chinese consultant said, giving the film its title.

A tall bald man wearing Chinese clothes sits on the floor, writing with a brush.

A messenger hands him a scroll. He reads the poems of his friend, Yüan Chên.

Po rolls up his poem and sends it to Yüan Chên.

They could show him eating, sleeping, drinking, walking in the mountains, standing on a bridge, and riding in a boat, a coach, and on horseback.

They had beautiful stock footage, including scenes of battle.

Po’s poem THE HAT GIVEN TO THE POET BY LI CHIEN, translated by Arthur Waley, was being sung by Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys:

**M.B. Goffstein**

Long ago a white-haired gentleman  
You made the present of a black gauze hat.  
The gauze hat still sits on my head;  
But you already are gone to the Nether Springs.  
The thing is old, but still fit to wear;  
The man is gone and will never be seen again.  
Out on the hill the moon is shining to-night  
And the trees on your tomb are swayed by the  
autumn wind.

•

In the back seat Chewy lifted his head from Margie's lap and they  
went into the house.

Faidoh put on his apron.

"Well, Margie," Cesar said, "you look very pretty in your blue  
gown."

She was four-eleven and as round as a beignet.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Her brown hair was shorter than Faidoh's. She had a large bust, big blue eyes, and a winning smile.

She wouldn't be safe alone in her apartment. Jane invited her to sleep over.

Faidoh stood and said, "Since I can't take Margie home, I guess I have to ask her in front of you all:

"Will you marry me?"

Jane and Carole screamed and kissed her.

•

When Margie got to the station the next morning, Brisky and Adams were out looking for a missing limousine.

The driver had been instructed to wait for Margie Lee and drive her home.

Miss Lee didn't answer her phone, the car company's dispatcher said.

Vance came in late.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Why did you leave?” he asked Margie. “You knew we were going to the Coconut Grove.”

“Margie Lee is missing!”

“That’s a publicity stunt.”

•

They drove to Margie Lee’s hotel.

A maid answered the door.

“She’s not here.”

“Do you know where she is?”

“Nope.”

“We’d like to see her appointment book.”

“Stay off the carpet which I just vacuumed, okay?”

•

“I can’t,” Jane said.

“Why ever not?”

“I have a dog.”

“Can’t someone take care of it?”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“No.”

“What kind of dog is it?”

“He’s a German shepherd. He’s named after Po Chü-i. His other name is Po Lo Tien.

“You can take him with you.”

“I don’t want to go!”

The fashion editor, who expected thanks, cried, “WHAT ARE YOU?”

“White, Indian and Negro.”

“Oh, my dear! I never— I didn’t mean— I would never— Did you say Indian?”

•

The photographer and his assistant and the stylist and her assistant flew to California.

“Why her?” griped the stylist.

“Jane is so precise.” The photographer mimicked *Harper’s Bazaar* editor, Noli Long.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“It’s love, baby.”

“What?”

“I don’t mean Noli’s a lesbian. Good lord! I mean she loves her.

Love, you know?

“Me, I have to love someone to shoot them.”

Where have I heard that before, thought a woman in the row ahead.

She had been given a new identity and was flying west to start a new life.

•

The editor flew in. Jane liked Mrs. Long because Mrs. Long liked her.

“Oh!” cried Jane, standing in her slip and looking at some photos.

“What is it my dear?”

“I love that dress.”

“Then you shall have it. It’s a Fox-Brownie. I’ll give you a carton of their frocks.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

She usually sold her old clothes, but these weren't hers.

She phoned her office in New York and told them to send the Fox-Brownies.

Now she had insight into Jane. The garments were casual and charming.

Jane's brother was modest as well.

When Mrs. Long met him he winked at her as though they shared a joke.

The fashion editor tried everything to get him to pose for the book.

No one has done a study on the effects of physical beauty, thought Mrs. Long.

Jane Lorraine. The all-American girl. White, Indian, and Negro.

Her beloved German shepherd—Polo—named for an ancient Chinese poet, goes with her everywhere.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Her hobby is collecting clothes by American designer Stella Brownie.

They were giving her a personality, making her a star.

The pages would revive in Jake Hirsh an image of her in a black velvet coat.

•

After a short ride, Margie Lee's kidnappers told her to close her eyes.

They led her down some steps.

"Okay," they said. "Open them."

If they hoped to be complimented on their basement apartment, they were disappointed.

She didn't pity them.

She was broke. No one would pay ransom for her, not even her manager.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The next day the kidnapers bought her movie magazines, scissors, curlers, comb, and hairspray.

“What’s wrong with my hair?”

The short dark-haired one said, “We think you could use a new style.

“We are not looking for a handout. We offer the best in artist management.”

•

The limousine driver was found hidden in a clump of bushes.

Forensics was still at the high school, so Vance and Margie drove there.

“Lotta dog hair, for what it’s worth,” a member of the forensics team said.

•

“Jane and I didn’t see the two men,” Carole said. “We only heard their voices. I’ll say something to him. What happened?”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“It’s easy to impersonate a chauffeur,” he replied. “All you need is a hat.

He fell back to sleep and when he awoke he remembered two men in the high school parking lot.

“Nurse!”

“Yes?”

“Who is the girl who was here?”

“Chief Margie.”

“That beautiful blonde was Chief Margie?”

“Lie down,” she said, pushing his head against the pillow. “You’re delirious.”

•

The next time he awoke, his employer, Del Levine, was seated next to him.

“Don’t worry about the hospital bills. They’re taken care of.”

“Thanks, Del.”

“You gave us quite a scare!”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“It’s all coming back to me. I drove a brunette to her high school reunion. She was a singer.

“She wanted to impress her classmates with the limo, but no one saw her.

“I said, I’ll park in a prominent spot and tell everyone I’m your driver.”

•

Margie Lee had a new Italian Boy hairdo and was ready to be rescued.

“Okay,” she said. “You can represent me. Get my contracts from my agent.

“Give me the phone book. Here’s his name and address. Go over there and say . . .”

•

“Hello.”

“What can I do for you?”

## **M.B. Goffstein**

The small dark-haired kidnapper, blinded by Faidoh's beauty, forgot his lines.

He said, "It's a story that begins back in high school. Margie Lee wanted to date me and my friend, and we didn't want to.

"We didn't try out for football in the hopes that she would give us up.

"We were afraid of what might happen at the reunion. Our worst fears were realized.

"She hit us over the head and took the limousine to Burbank."

## Book Two



**1956**

Do you know Frieda Lorraine?

She rides in a carriage pushed by Margie.

Margie wears a Claire McCardell popover dress with an adjustable waist.

She is taking Frieda to see Grandmother Lorraine, who says mean things about Margie's weight.

Margie talks back. "You criticize Jane's hair, and she's been on seven *Harper's Bazaar* covers!"

"Don't be like this girl." Loretta laughs her merry laugh.

•

Carole's husband, Jake, was always at the studio, and she was lonely in their mansion.

One day while she was out shopping she saw a tearoom where fortunes were told.

She took off her rings and went in.

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## M.B. Goffstein

While drinking her tea she noticed some things for sale.

The reader said she would marry a powerful man and live in a big house.

“Is there anything you want to ask?”

“No, thank you.”

Carole chose a crystal ball, paid her check, and went out to the street.

She put on her rings and took the crystal ball out of its bag and looked into it.

She saw a woman standing under a palm tree.

“Run!” Carole told her, a moment before an earthquake shook Santa Barbara.

“Madre de Dios,” the woman cried, wild-eyed, “an angel saved me from that tree!”

•

A man was backing a car uphill through an intersection.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He felt Carole's hand on his shoulder and heard her say, "What are you doing?"

•

She went over to Jane's, where she met the original owner of some of Jane's clothes.

"What is your name?" asked Carole.

"Mrs. Smullyan."

She had been in the *Harper's Bazaar* office, and when her Fox-Brownies went to California, she went with them.

She liked Jane very much. She was so pretty. And California was heaven.

Mrs. Smullyan was dim but grew brighter as Carole questioned her.

It fascinated Carole to learn that life on earth was really a matter of focus.

"There are lots of things I could do," Mrs. Sumllyan said, "but I don't know how.

## M.B. Goffstein

“I could go to heaven or the past or the future, but I’m afraid of my own shadow.

“Nobody sees me except you and Chewy.”

“Jane got him because of me,” Carole said. “My husband wanted to star her in a movie.

“I didn’t know him then, but I told him she wanted a dog and we fell in love.”

“I wish I had done things like that,” said the ghost.

•

The stories of the woman and the palm tree and the man in the car were in the *Examiner* next morning.

Carole went out to buy a scrapbook. On her way to the shops she had some fun.

A man had stabbed his wife and was going to throw the knife in the river.

“Don’t do that,” Carole said.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He ran all over the place, not knowing where to hide the bloody knife.

Everywhere he tried—under a rock, in a hole in a tree—Carole said, “Don’t put it there!”

The river was the Rio Grande and the police were Texas Rangers.

•

AN ANGEL STAYED MY HAND, said the *Examiner* the following morning.

Dateline—Amarillo, Texas.

•

“Darling,” Carole said at breakfast, “I love these Earth Angel stories.”

“Do you, darling?”

“Yes, and I’d like to have a clipping service so I don’t miss any of them.”

“I’ll tell Miss List to arrange it.”

He kissed her and left.

**M.B. Goffstein**

•

“Is this Jane?”

“Yes?”

“This is Mark Van Islip. My mother was a friend of your father.”

“Hello,” said Jane. “I have a china dog that belonged to your sister, Linda.”

“She had quite a collection.”

“I love them, too.”

“Would you like to go to an art exhibit this coming Saturday? I could pick you up at three.”

“I’m sorry,” she said, “but on Saturdays I take my dog to the beach.”

“Oh.”

“Would you like to come with us?”

Of course he accepted.

“What time should I pick you up?”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Jane said she would rather take her car because her dog liked to shed.

•

The following Saturday a nice-looking young man came to the door and met the famous model who was stunning in a plain white shirt and black Capri pants.

He had parked his low-slung red convertible behind her old gray car.

The modesty of her home didn't surprise him; her father had lived in a mountain hut.

"I brought you something," he said, handing her a gift-wrapped package.

She opened it and took out a china dog drinking milk.

"I love him!"

"Good."

He and Linda had climbed up to the attic and found her old collection.

## M.B. Goffstein

There were enough for fifty dates with Jane.

•

Big waves crashed on dangerous rocks leaving heaps of slimy seaweed.

Jane unsnapped Chewy's lead.

After they had walked half a mile she found a stick and gave it to Mark to throw.

Chewy ran after it.

Mark was proud when the beautiful dog brought it back.

He threw it again, and Chewy fetched it.

Mark started running.

•

"Chewy, stay," Jane said. "Guard him."

She disappeared over the rocks.

When she was far enough away, Mark wept, the pain was so intense.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He knew he would be wearing a cast and walking with crutches for months.

After awhile he stopped crying and said, “She must think I’m a real jerk.”

He was surprised when Chewy said, No, you’re a good sport.

•

“Is Detective Works there?”

“Just a sec, I’ll see.”

“A friend of mine broke his leg on the beach. I know Detective Works.”

“Would you like me to call an ambulance?” asked the operator.

“Oh, that’s a good idea. I can meet them there and show them where he is.”

•

“Rin Tin Tin is there!”

“That’s my dog.”

“He looks smart.”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Chewy is very smart.”

“I’ll bet he was a mischievous puppy.”

Jane and a young doctor were climbing the treacherous rocks ahead of two stretcher bearers.

“How did you guess?”

“His name. Should I know you? You’re so pretty, and you look familiar.”

“Thank you. I’m a model.”

“I bet Chewy gets steak every night.”

“He’s vegetarian,” she said, as they got to where he and Mark were waiting.

“I’ll visit you,” she promised Mark.

When they were gone, she took the china dog out of her pocket and showed him the beach.

•

Jane stopped at a drugstore and bought magazines and candy.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The hospital wouldn't allow Chewy upstairs, so she left the gifts for Mark.

The doctor's hastily acquired haircut grew out as he waited by Mark's bed.

•

Cesar's new movie, *Same Ch'ang-an Moon*, had been edited but not released.

Something was missing.

A writer came up with the idea of a librarian who loved Po Chü-i and wished she knew him.

They would have a chaste romance across the centuries, like *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*.

•

"Hallo, Mummy," said Carole. "Would you like to go out with me?"

"No darling, I'm too tired."

Carole's mother, Ada, lived in a guest house on the property.

## M.B. Goffstein

She had her own cook and maid, so she was quite independent, as she liked to say.

Hot dishes steamed on the sideboard.

Ada, wearing a cashmere robe over her nightgown, was reading the paper while drinking a cup of tea.

It was open to the Earth Angel story.

“I know she’s you,” she said.

A screenwriter was driving home drunk when the angel made him swerve into a bush.

“Then she said, ‘Sweet dreams,’ sort of sarcastically.”

“You have the gift.”

“How do you know?”

“You got it from me. Do you remember coming to America?”

“No, and I must have been ten.”

“After Hugh was killed in the war, I got an introduction to General Andrews.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I told him you were born in Washington when Hugh was at the Pentagon.

“We came in a bomber that needed repair. A soldier gave you a candy bar, and you slept most of the way.

“I had lost our papers.”

“What did you do?”

“A handsome captain in the Signal Corps was receptive to my thoughts.

“He was in the Aleutians.

“He had a wife and baby daughter. I can still see their picture on his desk.

“He was the second son in his family, so he was always for the underdog.

“He wrote to someone he had worked with at the Pentagon, and got it fixed.

“I made you old enough to get working papers.”

“How old am I, Mummy?”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Old enough to know better.”

“Hee, hee.”

“You’re nineteen, not twenty-two.

“So we never lived here before?”

“No, darling.

“That’s why your Aunt Pepita can’t come and visit. She’d spill the beans.”

“How is the Captain doing?”

“He’s back in Minnesota, at the head of his beloved electronics company.

•

Loretta’s phone rang.

“Excuse me,” she said to Margie.

“Hello?

“I’ll be right there!”

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Hello, Denise. Ready to sign your contract? Oh, I thought I told you we changed your name.

“You’re Denise Belt.”

He called in the head costume designer and introduced the two women.

“Hello,” said Denise.

The designer was squinting at her, seeing the faults she had to correct.

With her tiny waist, deep-set blue eyes, and red gold hair, Denise would be the perfect school mistress, dance hall madam, plucky widow, and mail-order bride.

She hoped never to show Denise’s legs.

“Put her in street clothes now,” Jake said, and turned and walked away.

Denise tried to converse with her as they walked to the back lot where M-G-M kept the wardrobe, but the designer’s mind was on the work ahead.

## M.B. Goffstein

•

Now that Mrs. Smullyan knew Carole, she was starting to get around L.A.

Carole was looking at clothes at an exclusive shop when the ghost appeared.

The ghost looked through the racks, making exclamations of disgust.

She removed garments from the racks and held them up to see them.

It looked like Carole was throwing them!

“Sit down, Mrs. Hirsh,” the saleslady said, handing her a glass of water.

Mrs. Smullyan took the other chair and said, “My husband should have waited for me.

“He knows I have no sense of direction.

“My daughter couldn’t wait to clean out my house and sell it.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“She packed my Fox-Brownie dresses and gave them to Mrs. Long at *Harper’s*.

“I was standing right there when she said mean things about my house.

“I was active in charitable organizations. We put on fashion shows to raise money.”

Carole thanked the saleslady and went to lunch.

The ghost stole bits of food from Carole’s plate and left them on the table.

•

Just outside the studio gate, Jake and his new leading lady were met by reporters.

He took her to the Brown Derby.

He was bored and barely spoke, but she chatted and asked the waiter, who seemed to know her, for a doggie bag.

“One thing, Denise,” Jake said, as the waiter pulled out her chair. “Stop seeing Jim Fairfield.”

**M.B. Goffstein**

•

“Mummy, do you know any ghosts?”

“Stay away from them, darling. They’re bores because they’re totally self-absorbed.”

“That’s true of Mrs. Smullyan.”

“When did she die?”

“Ten years ago, I’d say.”

“She needs an ami de voyage.

“Being dead is rather complicated. There are a great many things one can do.”

“She knows that.”

“Yes, but she must do something!”

“She’s been very kind. She said my baby changed her mind about coming.”

“Look in the obituaries. Find some gent to assist her.

“Appeal to his chivalry.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“And the next time you see a ghost, ignore it. They don’t know you’re psychic.”

•

Jim Fairfield had been waiting for Loretta at their usual table when she walked in with Jake.

She called him later and explained. “I got my big break! I can’t see you again.”

“Says who?”

“Mr. Hirsh.”

“I like our arrangement and want to keep it.”

“But, Jim!”

“I’ll ruin you,” he threatened.

•

The L.A.P.D. was falling apart.

Chief Conger said, “We need you, Margie.” They were getting bad press.

“You want your little girl to be safe, don’t you?”

## M.B. Goffstein

He scared her.

Chewy got up.

The chief backed off. "I'm saying you ran the department better than me.

"I'll give you a raise."

•

Looking into her crystal ball, Carole saw the actress Jake was excited about.

She saw the actress' boyfriend.

The actress didn't know it, but she was going on a long journey.

•

Jim Fairfield opened a private bank account.

He asked two Amigo truckers to help him play a trick on his girlfriend.

"Delivery from the studio," they said.

"What in the world?" she exclaimed.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Hanging from a wooden rod inside the box was a new fur coat of Thelma's.

When Denise reached for it, they pushed her in and fastened the straps.

She heard them robbing her.

As she tried to reason with them, she was hoisted and carried out the door.

A note in the pocket of the mink which she couldn't help trying on said,

"I want to take you on a slow boat to China."

She couldn't read it in the dark, but they released her at the wharf where a band was playing.

Jim gave her a dozen American Beauty roses and a set of white luggage.

She hadn't come to L.A. to be a movie star. She just wanted a better life.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

As they drank champagne and threw confetti at the moving men,  
she heard the thrilling call,

“All ashore who are going ashore!”

Then she saw her first class cabin and knew she made the right  
decision.

Her clothes and toiletries were there, neatly arranged by the  
moving men.

•

Denise didn't report to the studio on Monday and didn't answer  
her phone.

Jake banged on her door until a neighbor said she had moved.

Instead of going to the rental office or calling Miss List, he drove to  
Hollywood.

He thought he might see Jane.

A dog barked, and he thought of making her a blind girl with a  
seeing-eye dog.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He kept an eye out for her as he tried to hire Faidoh, who told him to call the police.

He didn't give Jake time to show him a photo of Denise.

•

"Isn't this Loretta Lorraine?" Detective Works asked when Jake arrived at the station.

"No," Jake said.

Works had a copy of the picture at home, signed, "Sincerely, Loretta Lorraine."

•

Works called Miss List and got Denise's new address.

"That's her," the building manager said, when Works showed him the photo.

•

Works took it outside and showed it to two old ladies, a mother and daughter.

## M.B. Goffstein

Why yes, they twittered, she used to have the apartment across from them.

“We think she moved because the Frigidaire her boyfriend bought her didn’t fit.

“We felt so sorry for the poor Amigo men, having to take it back to the truck.”

•

“You read my mind, Mr. Hirsh!”

The jeweler put a piece of black velvet on the counter and set a kneeling yellow camel on it.

“Look at this jade. Pick it up. See how warm and mellow it is.”

“I thought jade was green.”

“You make big joke. There are five colors: white, yellow, black, red, and green.

“White and yellow are the best. The fine carving makes it more precious.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“You can’t carve jade with a knife. You have to use a stick and an abrasive.

“They say when you touch fine jade, it feels like an unearthly stream.”

“I’ll take it, and I want something for my wife.”

The jeweler showed him twin brooches set with diamonds and sapphires.

“There’s a lady in Paris who wears two of everything. The others copy her.”

“It’s good for you,” Jake said, writing out a check.

•

“How are my two girls?” Jake asked, putting the packages on the dinner table.

As Ada watched her daughter pin the brooches on either side of her sweater, she wondered if Jake knew they were having twins.

•

## M.B. Goffstein

Paramount cast Betty Pringle as the librarian who falls in love with Po Chü-i.

The sets for *Same Ch'ang-an Moon* were available but couldn't be reused.

She was never in his world.

He appeared at her library.

•

Cesar was kneeling in his yard.

“What are you doing?” asked Margie.

“Planting bamboo.”

“That’s nice.”

She never knew what to say to him. She was afraid he would read Po’s poem about eating bamboo shoots to her.

•

Every afternoon after work, Margie walked to Loretta’s, pushing Frieda in her carriage.

Loretta was never home.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

One day a strange man came to the door and asked Margie what she wanted.

•

Soon after Thelma Levine married James Fairfield, she was filled with regret.

She was sorry for the hell she had put her father through. He begged her not to marry him.

The *Dun and Bradstreet* report he got said Jim had gone to Princeton but never held a job.

Del gave Jim a seemingly impressive position in his trucking company.

Now Thelma wanted a divorce.

“Hold your horses,” Del said. “Listen to me for a change.”

Jim had taken a bribe to prevent the sale of Del’s company to Amigo.

Del got him a seat on the new Amigo Board.

## M.B. Goffstein

It was *bashert* he had taken money from criminals and had to flee the country.

•

Faidoh got a letter from Singapore.

His mother was living in a British community, but it reminded her of the song “Faraway Places.”

Was he sure Margie was the right girl for him? Her friend Mr. Fairfield was getting a divorce.

She was sending a little pair of silk shoes for Frieda.

•

At the premiere of *Same Ch’ang-an Moon*, Jane looked enchanting in a Fox-Brownie dress of white European silk printed with gray and black locomotives.

They were driven by women engineers in striped caps and bib overalls.

Over it, she wore a black velvet jacket.

Her gloves matched the dress.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Noli Long, the editor-in-chief of *Harper's Bazaar*, had given her a carton of Fox-Brownies.

Their former owner, Mrs. Smullyan, came with them, so she was there, too.

She lived with Jane and Cesar and knew Margie and Faidoh, but they had never seen her.

As she mingled with the guests, she bumped into several old acquaintances.

“Well hello,” she said. “Fancy meeting you here! What brings you to L.A.?”

They couldn't see or hear her. They swatted themselves where she touched them.

She thought, There's Noli Long. Could I have been a clothes designer?

She tried to ask Carole, who pretended not to see her.

The ghost went up to Jane and lifted the fabric of her gown to examine it.

## M.B. Goffstein

Jane brushed at her hand.

The ghost tried again and Jane swatted her, thinking, I hope this doesn't have bugs!

How do I know it's European silk, wondered the ghost, and how did I know it lined the jacket?

I am used to being alone, surrounded by sketches.

But that was a dream. She had no idea how to make a dress, much less a jacket.

Maybe I had a dress like that, thought the ghost.

Faidoh and Margie had invited Detective Works. He knew all the stars.

The stars tried to think of his name, listing the detective shows on TV.

"No, no. He's a real detective," the woman sitting next to Greta Peck said.

"Did you know Cesar wanted Paramount to cast Erna Laing as the girl?"

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“She’s as old as the hills!”

Works turned and frowned at the women.

Miss Laing was in her forties.

She and her rancher husband had come from Oklahoma for the premiere.

The lights dimmed, everyone settled down, and what followed was pure magic.

The poems Cesar wrote with brush and ink had been made by a Chinese calligrapher.

When Betty sang, “Youth believes in love and beauty,” and Cesar answered, “But how long can they last?” the audience spontaneously applauded.

They loved the high lonesome sound of Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys.

As they left for the party, they looked up at the moon and thought, It’s the same one!

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Jane should have asked you to be her date,” Linda Van Islip told her brother.

“Well, let’s say go and say hello.

“How’s Chewy?” he asked Jane.

“He’s fine. He liked you. Are you Linda? I have two of your china dogs.”

“I’m sorry,” Mark said. “I should have introduced you.”

“Oh, that’s okay.

“I’d like you to meet my father, Cesar Lorraine. Dad, this is Linda Van Islip and her brother, Mark.”

“Linda!”

Cesar seized her hand and held it.

•

Carole, wearing a black Norell gown, had a moody husband on her hands.

Jake had a screenplay that wouldn’t get made because Jane refused to act in it.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He “saw” her in a black velvet coat, standing in an alley with a seeing-eye dog.

Tonight she was wearing a black velvet jacket that had the same type of collar.

•

The Hirshes left early because Carole needed her rest. Before going in, she visited her mother.

Ada Camell never slept. She had pinned a gold camel with ruby eyes to her cashmere bed jacket.

“You would have loved it,” Carole said.

“Jake will screen it for me.”

“Tell me more about ghosts.”

“Eventually their lights go out. Traveling in space isn’t that hard. Children do it. Oops. Sorry, darling.

“You still haven’t got rid of that ghost? I have been a beast. I’ll do it for you.”

•

## M.B. Goffstein

The ghost could have expanded her world by going home with another star, but she went with the Lorraines.

•

“Papa,” asked Faidoh, “Are you sorry Miss Laing got married?”

“No. I believe her husband’s story that he thought she married someone else.

“She was a great actress. Her movies showed me there were all kinds of people.”

•

Bobby Lorraine was coming home on leave.

He had sent Jane a ring.

She put it on her finger when she and Chewy were alone in her room.

The little diamond chip was precious, coming with the love of a pure and grateful heart.

•

One day at mail call Bobby had received a letter.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He didn't know who it was from.

Its scent made him remember a pretty girl sitting in a car talking to him.

When he opened the envelope he found Jane's picture and some writing.

"What does it say?" he asked his sergeant.

"Sergeant."

"What does it say, Sergeant?"

The sergeant read the simple words aloud:

"Dear Bobby, I hope you like the army. I remember our walk up the mountain, do you?"

"Private, if this girl were writing me, I'd learn to read."

The sergeant asked Bobby what he wanted to say, and wrote it out for him.

Because he wanted to meet her, the sergeant had Bobby propose to her.

•

## M.B. Goffstein

Jane and Chewy drove to the train in Pasadena.

“Does he bite?” asked Bobby.

“No, Silly. Anyway, you’re staying with Margie and Faidoh next door.

“My best friend, Carole’s, diamond is four carats, but I like mine better.

“Her husband is a movie producer.

“They just had twins!

“Isn’t it pretty?” she asked, taking her left hand off the wheel and showing it to him.

Bobby was going to re-up. He and Jane had written about living in married quarters.

Chewy sat in the backseat, thinking.

•

Bobby hunched over his guitar, waiting for Faidoh to come out of the kitchen.

He scowled.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

He hated civilian life.

In the army you could earn a stripe, and everyone would know your rank.

If you went to a bar they would serve you before they served a private.

He appreciated a well-ordered life and was learning to read and write.

•

No one but the little china dogs on Jane's dresser and the greathearted dog who never left her side knew she was going to marry Bobby.

She had wanted a china dog. She even asked him if the P. Ex. sold them.

Instead, she got the ring!

•

Chewy said, Bobby isn't right for you.

He never talks to you.

**M.B. Goffstein**

When we go to the station, give him back the ring and tell him  
you're too young.

There's a gift shop in Pasadena.

You can buy that black Belgian shepherd standing on his hind legs,  
holding a bouquet.

Jane put the ring in its box.

•

Cesar was home from the studio, blissfully sitting and reading Po  
Chü-i's poem THE GRAND HOUSES AT LO-YANG when Chief Conger  
knocked at Cesar's door and told him he had to move.

They were getting complaints about sight-seeing buses.

"I wish there was something I could do, some strings I could pull,"  
the Chief hinted.

"You own a mountain. Why don't you build there?"

The fees for a million permits and variances would line the Chief's  
pockets.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

But why go to all that trouble when these nice little homes were already built?

Now Cesar understood why people who had money always needed more money.

He would buy his neighbors' homes.

•

“Are you kidding?” cried Mr Lasagna. “No offense. I don’t complain!”

They loved the tour buses.

•

Before Dorey Deane moved to Michigan she was fired from writing the Danger mysteries.

Danger hadn’t solved the last two crimes.

He kept going in to bookstores and telling salesclerks he was learning Russian.

A new writer became Thomas A. Garfield, and Dorey got a series called *The Grizzled Miner*.

## M.B. Goffstein

She had signed a second contract promising not to disclose that she wrote the books.

She was back in Los Angeles, renting Miss Laing's old house from Cesar.

•

Suddenly, Mr. Lasagna lost his job and Miss Laing wrote a sad letter to Faidoh.

Faidoh arranged for her to "lodge" with the Lasagnas.

•

Paramount bought *The Grizzled Miner* for Cesar and gave Miss Laing the role of Miss Louie.

Instead of satin gowns, she wore crisp cotton dresses by Louella Ballerino.

Thanks to her boss, Abby Sundell, Dorey became a consultant.

She wrote a script in which Miss Louie serves the Grizzled Miner a sandwich.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The look on his face as he hesitates to pick it up in his dirty hands would win him an Oscar.

•

The movie Jake Hirsh wanted to star Jane Lorraine in was called *Love and Dust*.

It was based on a *Life* magazine article about a sculptor whose girlfriend looked like Jane.

His studio was gray, and everyone who went to see him came out covered with the dust of clay and plaster.

He also was a painter, and guess what color his canvases were.

•

“I love him,” sobbed Jane.

It was her boyfriend’s shabbiness, his selfishness, his stubble, his pasty complexion!

“Your father is an artist,” he said. “You’re just a shop-window dummy.”

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

Chewy said, Your mother was disappointed in your father. You want to recreate her life so you can sympathize with her and forgive her for not loving you.

•

“Sweetheart,” Jake’s psychoanalyst said, “you’ll find another girl with brown eyes.”

•

Jane said, “I’m breaking our engagement.”

“I’ll sue you for breach of promise.”

It made her pity him all the more, and she wondered how much to give him.

•

Chewy went to Cesar’s room and pushed him to the closet where he kept his pistol.

“Get out,” Cesar told Jane’s boyfriend. “Go back to Berkeley, where you belong!”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The young man's cowardice made Jane feel the strong sorrow she thought was love.

•

"Hi, Janie."

"Hi, Mr. Killman."

"Hello Handsome."

I'm being brushed.

"I see that. How are you?" he asked Jane.

"Fine, and you?"

"Could be better. The M-G-M stars want their own cameramen, and I'm out in the cold."

"That's terrible."

"You'd use me."

"I can't act."

"It's better. Go up to your mark and say your lines. Do what the director tells you to do."

**M.B. Goffstein**

“You do have to think, though. What should I have for dinner can look tragic.

“Ask your dad.”

“He says it’s like the Marines.”

“I’ve been down on my luck before, but not with old age staring me in the face.”

Jane went inside and called Jake Hirsh.

•

“Who’ve you got for the male star?” the studio head asked.

“Gene Kelly.”

“Kelly?”

“He’s the right height, and he speaks French and Italian. Put him in a frizzy gray wig, and he even looks like him.”

•

Giacometti, a rich and famous artist, lives in squalor.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The camera travels through his place in Paris: the bedroom with a chair for a night table, the telephone room, his studio, and his brother, Diego's, studio.

A museum director is coming to choose work for an important retrospective.

Annette has an idea.

As soon as Alberto leaves for the café, wearing a short necktie, she starts dusting.

•

“Black and white?” cried Jake's boss.

“It's a study of the artist as killer.”

•

Alberto sits in the café-tabac surrounded by admirers as he draws on a napkin.

When he comes home and sees what Annette has done, he is furious.

## M.B. Goffstein

He is superstitious about the dust. He wanted it. “Look what you have done,” he says.

“You have ruined me.”

“Let me put in a dance,” Kelly said.

As Giacometti comes in and sees what Annette has done, he advances on her:

*Jeté sauté, jeté sauté. Jeté, jeté, jeté, jeté. Changement, changement, changement.*

He says his lines and leaves.

“I’d like Annette to imitate him,” Kelly said.

The director didn’t mind. He told the cast, “Let’s see where Kelly takes this.”

Kelly did Jane’s part.

Everyone loved it.

She had to stay late and work with him. He had taught children to dance.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Standing in third position, she would sweep her right leg behind her left leg, sweep it out, and hop on it.

Then the left leg.

Sweep it back, sweep it out, hop.

Sweep it back, sweep it out, hop.

Then the sweeps without the hop: right, left, right, left.

Get in fifth position, jump high in the air, change the feet in mid-air, and come down in fifth position.

•

What happened to Jake's image of Jane wearing a black velvet coat in a dark alley?

It should come at this point in the story when she decides to leave Alberto.

But he leaves, at least temporarily.

Everyone thought this called for a song. A contract musician was called in.

## M.B. Goffstein

“Can you sing?” Kazan asked Jane. If not, he would teach her to sing-speak the words.

“Yes,” she said.

“You make it hard to love you, something like that” he told the songwriter.

It should be Peggy Lee singing about a dust devil. They could have dyed her hair.

Jane was too simple.

Alberto doesn't come home that night. We see him with some ugly customers.

Now does Annette stand in the alley?

The vision that haunted Jake wasn't in the movie.

It was a Gene Kelly musical in black and white, directed by Elia Kazan.

•

Kazan had to go back to New York. He was directing a play on Broadway.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Goodbye and good luck,” said Jake.

“We’re taking out the song and dance and going back to the earlier script,” he told the cast.

“You’re cutting the good stuff!” Kelly said.

“It wouldn’t be worth cutting if it weren’t good. It will add to the strength of the movie.”

Kelly’s appeal to the studio head fell on deaf ears.

•

The Giacomettis go to London.

Alberto moans he has done nothing, his work is no good, he shouldn’t be showing it.

He buys Annette a black velvet coat.

We see him at his opening surrounded by rich bohemians and intellectuals.

Annette stays on in London. She stands in an alley in her black velvet coat.

•

## M.B. Goffstein

The young doctor who had accompanied Mark Van Islip to the hospital in an ambulance and set his leg spent his free time at the beach hoping to see Jane.

He finally saw her and Chewy, but they were with Tab Hunter.

•

“This is Dr. Dawson. How’s the leg?”

“Fine!” said Mark Van Islip.

“Do you still see Jane Lorraine?”

“I’m married. You should call her.”

“That’s what Chewy said.”

“Isn’t he great?”

“Tell you what,” said Mark. “There was something I wanted to give Jane.

“Why don’t you come over here and get it? That’ll give you an excuse to call her.”

•

Mark’s wife, Ellen, made the disheveled doctor a drink.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“These belonged to Linda,” Mark said, placing a carton on the coffee table.

“How is Linda?”

“She’s in England.”

•

“We’re gonna get sued,” said Jake’s boss.

“It’s loosely based on him!”

They had just seen dailies.

“What’s the girl doing in the alley?”

“She feels secure around dust bins.”

“She could hear a kitten, save it, and have something of her own,” someone said.

Art is the real religion, thought Jake. The right thing always comes from it.

Annette leaves the dog with a veterinarian and goes back to Paris.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Standing in the alley behind Raspelli's studio, she decides to return to the dog and the handsome young vet.

•

Ellen, the dog trainer, took Chewy into a soundproof room, read him his lines, and discussed his motives.

•

“Action!”

“Chewy, what's wrong with your paw?” cried Jane.

I'm acting.

“Cut!”

**1957–1963**

“She’s just lonely,” said Margie, adding to a pile of dirty old diamonds.

“How’s the little girl?” Mrs. Eustace would ask, bending over Frieda while fumbling in her pocket.

She was very old and died the night she gave Frieda a crumpled tiara.

The police found Mrs. Eustace’s house ransacked.

Faidoh wanted to give them the diamonds, but Margie said they would be stolen.

•

“Hi, Carole. Who’s Jake’s jeweler?”

“Margie! How exciting!

“What are you getting? I’d like to see you with a twelve-inch string of very large pearls.

“Did Faidoh solve a big case?”

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

Blast, thought Ada Camell. Why did I let Carole talk me into coming out with her?

“Alice!”

“Hello, Tumpy. May I present my daughter, Carole?”

“How do you do? Lovely to have seen you. I must run and catch up with my tour group.”

•

“You won’t believe what just happened! I saw Alice and Carole Corgi!”

“You’ve lost Grandison,” said a friend.

•

“Tumpy was always in love with Hugh,” Ada said, taking Carole’s arm.

“They’re childless, so you’ll inherit Grandison.”

“What’s Grandison?”

“I’d give it to the National Trust if I were you.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“The best thing about it is a mystery. Eighty years ago, a servant stole the Corgi diamonds.

“Isn’t that fun?”

“As to why I married your father, your Aunt Pepita dated him and that made him seem desirable.

“But then had you, and you were all I wanted.”

•

“Jake, darling, I have a confession to make.”

“I already know,” Jake said. “Forgive me, Lady Alice, but I always check up on people through *Dun and Bradstreet*.”

“You were very kind not to tell Carole.”

“I thought you were right to have left Lord Corgi, if you don’t mind my saying so.”

•

Like many a heroine, Ada loved playing Solitaire.

## M.B. Goffstein

Every layout had a different atmosphere, and there was a joke she never tired of: she'd get a ten, a nine—and instead of an eight, there'd be an Ace.

Jake kept her supplied with new decks of cards.

•

“Can I help you?” asked Faidoh.

“Me name is U Corgi. I'm a toff from England.

“It 'as come to my attention that your good lady was acquainted wiv the late Mrs. Eustace.”

“Yes.”

“I wonder if Mrs. Eustace ever mentioned the diamonds she stole from me.”

Looking at Faidoh was like looking at the moon.

“U” soon let slip that he and Mrs. Eustace stole the diamonds.

“She couldn't 'ave done if wivout me. I opened the safe, see. But when we come 'ere, she give me the slip.

## **The Lorraines in Hollywood**

“It’s a bloody big country, mate. I’ve been all over the place looking for ‘er.”

### **Corgi Diamonds Found**

Hollywood—A fortune in diamonds stolen from the ancestral home of Lord Corgi in England was recovered here last week.

They were stolen by the cook, Mrs. Eustace. Her accomplice was arrested here today.

Mrs. Eustace died here last week of age-related natural causes.

### **Queen of England’s Cousins are Alive**

Hollywood—Cousins of Queen Elizabeth II believed killed in a London air raid are living here.

Lady Alice Corgi had a memory loss.

## M.B. Goffstein

“Mummy, we live in Kensington Palace,” the six-year-old Lady Carole piped.

“I didn’t believe her,” Lady Alice said.

Their apartment in Kensington Palace was damaged in the air raid.

Lady Alice is ninth in the line of succession to the English throne.

Lady Carole, a former model for *Harper’s Bazaar*, is married to M-G-M producer, Jake Hirsh.

•

“Grandma,” said Hugh, “when I grow up, I am going to marry Frieda.”

Hm, she thought.

When he and Birdie were born, Ada looked at him and said, “Well, Hugh, we meet again.”

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

In the British section of Singapore, Loretta and James Fairfield read in *The Queen*,

“Her Majesty expressed pleasure that her cousins are alive.”

“She’s so gracious,” said one of their acquaintances.

•

“Hi, Mr. Killman.”

“Hi, Janie. I’m glad you’re still talking to me.”

“Of course I am!”

“I’m sorry about the movie.”

“Oh, that’s okay. I needed the money.”

“What for?”

He wasn’t rude, he was foreign.

“My mother is sick in Singapore.”

“I didn’t know you had a mother.”

“Of course I do, silly. Everyone does, even if they don’t know them.”

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Why aren’t your father and brother paying her bills? Why do you have to do it?”

“Faidoh has a family, don’t forget.”

“Does your mother know you’re sending the money?”

“No, her new husband, Mr. Fairfield, wrote to me. It’s our little secret.”

“What’s Fairfield’s first name?”

“James.”

“Where’s Chewy?”

“I’m just going in to get him. Would you like to take a walk with us?”

She opened the door.

Hi, Jane. Hi, Mr. Killman. I’ll get my leash.

•

James Fairfield missed his first wife, Thelma Levine. Her father was rich, and there wasn’t anything he wouldn’t do for his little girl.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Jim had cheated on her because although he knew he was superior, he felt inferior.

He told himself he couldn't give her anything her father couldn't give her.

The more he learned about his new wife, the more he felt cheated.

She had been married to Cesar Lorraine.

If that wasn't bad enough, her daughter was Cover Girl Jane Lorraine.

She was as beautiful as they made them.

To top it all off, Loretta had broken a contract with Jake Hirsh at M-G-M.

Jim couldn't recall the sequence of events.

It was too late anyway.

At least he had thought of writing to Jane and getting some money from her.

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

“You didn’t send him Chewy’s earnings did you?” Mr. Killman asked as they walked along the palm-lined street.

“No. He isn’t related to her. He has his own bank account.”

“He was great in *Love and Dust*. He’s a real actor.”

You can have it, said Chewy.

Mr. Killman laughed so hard, he had to sit down on someone’s lawn.

Jane and Chewy sat with him.

They heard a thud as a car sped away with a screech, leaving a body in the street.

Martin Killman jumped to his feet and fired off his Leica.

He saw a grinning face in his viewfinder.

“Ach,” he said, “My cameraman just played a trick on me with a tripod bag.”

•

M-G-M’s editor was in Europe when *Love and Dust* was completed.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Released to third-rate theaters, it was booed by winos in Times Square when Jane didn't undress.

The high-collared black velvet coat looked so promising.

Artists and out of work actors in the daytime audience thought it was great.

A weird cat, Raspelli, was a sculptor, and his beautiful girlfriend, Nanette or Jeanette, posed for the crazy plaster gargoyles he modeled in clay.

It infuriated the winos that he modeled her head and she wore a blouse and skirt.

The artists and actors watched the credits:

Directed by Elia Kazan

Raspelli, Gene Kelly

Nanette, Jane Lorraine

Director of Photography, Martin Killman

There were all kinds of gaffes.

## M.B. Goffstein

Jake wanted them fixed, but the studio didn't care since it was making money.

The part where Raspelli brushed one foot behind the other and brushed it out was too much!

Middle and upper class matrons berated their local theater managers.

"Listen here," they said. "We depend on you to give us the important shows."

•

"Which has the most right to complain, the Indian or the Negro?" Cesar read in *Herndon's Lincoln*, a gift from Linda Van Islip, and burst out laughing.

Everyone on the set came running when they heard the strange sound.

Earlier, he had read that the Lincolns' stepmother "was not only industrious and thrifty, but gentle and affectionate; and her newly adopted

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

children for the first time, perhaps, realized the benign influence of a mother's love."

It's never too late, he thought, though he believed he was still married to Loretta.

It put him in the holiday spirit, and he asked his driver to take him to some shops.

He got out and started looking in windows.

The clothes were far more beautiful than when they were being worn.

He saw some leather bags and, deciding to get one for Jane, went inside.

A young woman greeted him.

"I want to buy a bag for my daughter." He showed her the one he liked.

She said, "If you are buying a bag for Jane Lorraine, I recommend this one."

## M.B. Goffstein

It was smaller than the one in the window and had a different shape.

He was disappointed.

“She is too petite for a mailbag. The Hermés Kelly bag is very feminine.”

The manager hissed, “You’re fired.”

Cesar thought of arguing, but why should the young lady work here?

He would get her a job at Paramount. He hadn’t heard they weren’t hiring.

“Shall I wrap this for you?”

The manager took the bag from the window as Miss Jones went to the rear of the shop.

•

Miss Jones wasn’t what she seemed. She was Carmencita Wyatt, the heiress.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

She felt disappointed as she went to get her bag. She had hoped Cesar would defend her.

He is still not as bad as the others, she thought, going out the side entrance.

He was standing there.

“May I take you home?” he asked.

He looked so worried, she almost confessed but decided to wait and see.

•

“You can help me choose gifts for my family,” he said, as they rode in the Paramount car.

His son, Faidoh, was the only one in the family who had wanted to be in movies.

No one would act with him, he told Miss Jones. He was too good looking.

“I would act with him,” he said.

## M.B. Goffstein

Paramount had offered Cesar his new contract early, and he refused.

He was going back to his mountain.

He credited Miss Jones with the idea of getting Faidoh a part in *GI Cowboy*.

•

She was adamant that he not drive her home. She lived at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

Her chauffeur was following them.

Before she went in, she would let down her hair and become Carmencita again.

•

Faidoh would play guitar and sing in the barracks.

The posters and marquees would say, “And introducing Faidoh Lorraine.”

Detective Works quizzed him. “Who was the first movie actor to have that line?”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“I give up.”

“Gene Autry.”

•

At night in her cottage Carmencita was writing an exposé of Hollywood.

Cesar wasn't pretty and appealing. He was humble and plain spoken.

He let the makeup girl do what she wanted, so sometimes he looked pretty strange.

Before she proposed, Carmencita would take him to meet her son at school.

•

“Oh, Chewy, I'm bored,” said Jane.

Then I suggest you unwrap those china dogs and throw away the carton.

“Oh, I forgot!”

•

**M.B. Goffstein**

Dear Carole,

Please find Linda Van Islip. Someone is going to kidnap her and hold her for ransom!

Love,

Jane

•

Dear Jane,

I enjoyed meeting Carole and Jake. The twins were with their nanny.

I'm sorry that note scared you. I used to write them when my mother was mad at me.

Sincerely,

Linda

•

“Look at this, Mr. Shapiro.”

Shapiro sat down at the Movieola.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“At first I thought the film was defective, but the light hovers near Faidoh’s head.

“I found the old *Harper’s Bazaar* from his wedding.

“Sure enough, the pictures of him are touched up, so I called Richard Avedon.

“He said he has a halo.”

“A halo!”

“It shows up on film.”

“He should know,” Honey Shapiro said, tenderly touching his stomach.

“Let’s kill him.”

“He’s acting with his father. It’s not kosher. Why don’t you try a shampoo?”

•

Lazlo Molnar was in Hollywood trying to put together a property for M-G-M.

## M.B. Goffstein

One day in a bookstore he saw *Jenny's Birthday Book* by Esther Averill.

He bought it from a cloying salesgirl who kept asking about his "little ones."

Wresting the package from her, he went to a drug store, but it was too public.

In his hotel bungalow he eagerly paged through it, sounding out the words.

I see him before me.

Below his black beret were black-rimmed eyeglasses, a large nose, and thin curling lips.

He wore a dark scarf and a tan trench coat.

He thought Esther Averill, who had been an editor for *Women's Wear Daily* and founded a publishing house in Paris, was a primitive American genius.

He, a European, was a great genius.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The flowers would sing, the moon would sing. Jenny's kind owner,  
Captain Tinker, would sing.

He listed the cast:

Jenny Linsky, a shy black cat

Her brothers, Edward and Checkers

Captain Tinker

Pickles the Fire Cat

Florio (wears an Indian feather)

Two big fighters, Sinbad and The Duke = Rocky (Gene Kelly)

A little stranger (female)

•

“Pepita! You don't look a day over thirty!”

“I'm Penny. I brought you Gran's pearls, but it doesn't look as if you  
needed them.”

“No. Keep them.”

“Could I have some of that food?”

She pulled up a chair.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“It’s lovely.”

“Capitalism,” said her aunt.

“Yes, but you have to be very bright and energetic, don’t you? It doesn’t seem fair.

“I don’t think I’ve had this before. What is it?”

“Fried matzos.”

“Delicious! Well, I must dash. I’m off to China.

“You’d better have the pearls. And here are the papers and keys to Coverly.

“I’ve organized a cave on Hua Mountain. I expect I’ll get eaten by a tiger.

“I want to communicate with Mummy’s spirit. She died in the Blitz, you know.”

“Yes. I’m sorry.”

“Just when I couldn’t think what to do with the pearls or Coverly, you turned up alive.”

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

After seeing her niece out, Ada said to her sister, Pepita, who had entered first, “She’s why they call us eccentric.

“Will you do me a favor?”

•

Jane Lorraine accepted the role of Jenny Linsky, and Cesar, no longer under contract to Paramount Pictures, was asked to play Captain Tinker.

“You’re making a film with Faidoh, so you should make one with Jane,” Carmencita said.

•

Penny boarded her flight to Honolulu, found her seat, and settled in, taking off her shoes, putting on slippers, and wrapping herself in a cashmere shawl that had belonged to her great grandmother.

Then she opened her bag and took out a small chamois pouch. From it she removed a black cat.

## M.B. Goffstein

Her seatmate's eyes bugged out. He collected those bronze cats made in Vienna in the thirties, and he had every one except—you guessed it.

Detective Fallon leaned across the aisle.

“Please,” he said. “Pretend you know me and take the seat next to mine.”

“Lovely!” she cried, gathering her things.

He stood to let her have the window seat.

“I was afraid your black cat would be stolen while you slept,” he murmured.

“I’m going to live in a cave in China.” She repeated her line about the tiger.

Fallon smiled, exposing small white teeth, translucent in the sunlight.

She thought, Lucky Yanks.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

The one thing Ada wanted from Coverly was a black cat that belonged to her mother.

Children had not been allowed to touch it. They might have harmed the patina.

•

Chewy raised his head. Mrs. Smullyan had a visitor!

“Come along,” Pepita urged. You can come back whenever you like.”

“I won’t know how,” Mrs. Smullyan said.

“If you stay, you’ll fizzle. Come on, it’s a lovely journey and great fun.”

“How would I fizzle?”

“Stay and see.”

“Wait, I’m coming! Goodbye Chewy.”

He felt her hand on his coat.

He never knew how she fit in. She was a ghost from New York.

**M.B. Goffstein**

She used to rearrange the china dogs on Jane's dresser and once took a jar of cold cream from Jane's hand.

Jane thought she had almost dropped it, but she had snatched it back from Mrs. Smullyan.

•

"We've bean to Coverly," Carole said, on a transatlantic call. "Do you remember a black cat of Gran's?"

"It's the one thing I wanted, and it's not there. Penny must have pinched it.

"We'll be in California two days from now. We're flying out tomorrow."

•

"Mummy! What are those earrings you're wearing?"

"You bought them for me when you were small. You thought they were camels."

"They don't match!"

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

“Well, I like them. I missed you so much, I thought, I’ll wear my elephants.

“The stones are pretty, aren’t they?”

“What are they meant to be?”

“Aquamarine. my birthstone.”

“Let’s take Birdie to Woolworth’s. Maybe we can find you a necklace.

“I’m so glad to be home. We’ll buy lots of junk and throw it away when we’re tired of it.

“Grandison is going to own Hugh.

“Everyone thinks we were cruel to leave him in boarding school, but he begged us to let him stay.

“Jane’s friend Linda Van Islip was a lecturer at the School of Economics.

“We hired a tutor she recommended. When Hugh is at school, the tutor can put Grandison to rights.

**M.B. Goffstein**

“Linda came home with us. I think she wants to marry Jane’s father.”

•

Secrecy surrounded *Jenny*.

The scenes were painted in the flat primary and secondary colors of Esther Averill’s illustrations.

Props were copied and constructed.

•

“Why did you send Fallon?” asked Works.

“He hates traveling. He’ll serve the summons and come home,” Margie said,

“Tell him to buy me something.”

•

“Telegram for you, Detective,” an airline representative said in Honolulu.

Fallone ripped it open.

•

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

Lazlo sneered at the idea of his cast wearing ears and tails.

Gene Kelly wore a white T shirt, black chinos, white socks, and black loafers.

Tab Hunter's Pickles wore a yellow shirt, khakis, white socks, and black loafers.

Jane wore a black leotard, a red neckerchief, and black ballerina slippers.

Jay Silverheels as Florio wore buckskins like the ones he had worn with the Lone Ranger, despite a threatened lawsuit from the Wrather Corporation.

Americans are children. They will love it, thought Lazlo.

I think he was surprised by its beauty.

The cast and crew knew they were filming a classic, and so it has proved to be.

•

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Carole and her mother went up and down the creaky wooden aisles of the dime store collecting amusing things and breathing the aromas.

They chose lilac nail polish for Birdie.

They found her looking at a stack of blank books called Record Books.

They had pebbly black paper covers, maroon cloth spines, and blue-lined pages.

“Get them all,” Carole said.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

### *Selections from Birdie A. Hirsh's diary*

1964

God keeps us in Heaven until he puts us in a story.

Then he puts us on earth.

We pray we are in a good story.

Johanna Spyri made Karla walk again. Did Karla pray to Johanna Spyri?

Did Johanna Spyri pray to God to let her write a good story?

•

“You are gathering your characters delightfully,” Jane Austen wrote to a niece who was writing a novel.

Frieda and I think we are delightful characters.

We have an Aunt Jane, but she would never write to us.

•

## **M.B. Goffstein**

Frieda and I are Jewish! We went to Sunday School and heard the story of Adam and Eve and the snake.

I passed Frieda a note: "God is gathering His characters delightfully."

We are people of the book! We have a prayer, "Who is like unto Thee, Almighty God, Author of life and death, source of salvation?"

Frieda is Jewish because her mother is Jewish. My father's mother was Jewish.

We don't know if I am really Jewish or if Hugh is a lord, even though he will inherit Grandison.

I will get Coverly. Frieda and I are planning our debutante ball there.

My grandmother is related to the Queen, so I can be introduced to her, and Frieda's grandfather is Cesar Lorraine, so the Queen will also want to meet her.

## The Lorraines in Hollywood

We'll have a brilliant season and be proposed to by two lords, but there the dream ends.

We are proud Americans, delightful characters, and Californians. We would never be like that idiot Isabelle Archer in the novel by Henry James.

I made up a girl called Cricket but couldn't think of anything for her to do.

1965

Mom has been in England, and Dad and I came to meet her.

We went to Yom Kippur services at Temple Emanuel, on Fifth Avenue.

At home everyone rises for the Mourner's Kaddish.

Here Dad and I stood alone to hear Birdie Birnbaum Hirsh's name.

I also thought of Cricket.

## **M.B. Goffstein**

I want to go to Hebrew Union College and be a rabbi.  
Frieda, with her beautiful voice, can be a cantor.

“The departed whom we now remember have entered into the peace of life eternal. They still live on earth in the acts of goodness they performed and in the hearts of those who cherish their memory. May the beauty of their life abide among us as a loving benediction.

“May the Father of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort all the bereaved among us.”

Dad and I sat down and the man on my other side said, “I’m sorry for your trouble. I’m Billy Rose.”