

BUTTERFIELD 8

1960

MGM & Alton Linebrook Productions, Screenplay by Charles Schnee and John Michael Hayes. Based on the novel by John O'Hara. Directed by Daniel Mann. Produced by Pandro S. Berman.

Setting: New York City, early 1960s

Gloria is a gorgeous young woman with a knack for getting into trouble. A fashion model who hops from bed to bed, Gloria's wild nature and great beauty attract a seemingly endless procession of men.

One man, however, manages to break through Gloria's iron defenses: Liggot. A man living off his wife and her family, Liggot is a ruined shell of his former enterprising self. Once a successful and idealistic lawyer, Liggot has allowed his life to disintegrate until all he lives for is booze and sex. Gloria and Liggot connect like wildfire, and each is totally consumed with passion for the other. For the first time in her life, Gloria is truly in love, and Liggot finally sees a way out of his pit of despair.

Unfortunately, the lovers are never to realize happiness together. Liggot's wife discovers the affair, and Gloria flees the city, unable to reconcile her past with any hope for the future. Liggot chases after her and watches in horror as she drives her car off a cliff. All but destroyed, Liggot returns to his wife to collect his things and to say goodbye: He blames himself for Gloria's death and wishes to find absolution in the anonymity of a new life.

HAPPY

The owner of the motel where Liggot and Gloria spent a night of passion speaks to a broken-hearted Gloria about her own past and cautions Gloria not to end up as she has.

So, what was I saying? Oh, yeah. So she said to herself, you get in solid with the director — he'll put you in solid with the producer and pretty soon you'll wind up with a big part in the show. So, two days — or should I say, two nights later, she was in solid, yeah, with the director . . . with his cousin . . . she was

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so busy being in solid with every Tom, Dick, and Harry and his Uncle George, she wouldn't recognize a producer if she found one right under her pillow. You take sugar? So, now time passes, and our heroine is very big, yeah, but not in the theater. No, in all the wrong places. In five hundred little black books; in twenty-eight divorce cases; two police blotters; and in one restraining sheet in the psychopathic ward in Bellevue. Yeah, she hit it big — from a size twelve dress to a size forty-four. She went from looking like an orchid to a face like a pan of worms. And all because she said, with only a rag, a bone, a hank of hair — I will move the world my way! What's the matter? I'm boring you. Hey, you live it up — you kick up your heels — you grab everything you can — you light the candle from one end to the other, like they say. And then, one day you too can be the proud proprietor of a very heavily mortgaged roadside brothel, and wish you were dead.

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