

STAR FOR A NIGHT



You are going to read a newspaper article about attending a new attraction for film fans in the US. For questions 1-8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

For 45 dollars, visitors to Tinseltown Studios are treated like their Hollywood idols on Oscar night. Laurel Ives joins the would-be stars.

It is a warm evening in Los Angeles, and I am standing in a long queue outside a fabulous-looking place called Tinseltown Studios. Nervous chatter and the noise of a distant, six-lane freeway hum in the air. Women busily re-apply their lipstick and smooth their dresses. Like me, they are hoping that they are about to get a taste of what it feels like to be a star.

We are spending an evening at one of the newest and strangest ideas dreamt up by the American entertainment industry. Tinseltown's owners, Ogden Entertainment, claim that, for one night only, they will 'turn ordinary individuals into screen legends' - and I can hardly wait.

Our evening begins at 7.30 p.m. Handing over my ticket, I walk down the long red carpet ahead. 'Fans' approach and ask for my autograph. I graciously agree. 'Reporters' ask where I got my outfit and who will star with me in my new film. On my right, a 'television crew' is interviewing two girls. A 'journalist' approaches. 'Congratulations,' she says, 'you are nominated as Best Actress tonight.'

She turns out to be one of the organisers of the event and she tells me that, along with three other nominees, I will be edited into a scene from a famous movie so that it will seem as if I am the star. The eight scenes (showing four men and four women) will then be broadcast over dinner and the Best Actress and Best Actor chosen. Nominees are chosen by staff at the beginning of the evening, on the basis of who they think looks as if they have the most guts. So why did they choose me? Suddenly, the nerves that the staff did not detect come to the surface. Coping with people who are pretending to be fans, journalists and TV crews is one thing, but being broadcast acting badly in front of 200 people? I didn't know if I could handle that. Then I and the other three nominees are

shown into a lift and taken upstairs to the studio. I am to replace Genevieve Bujold as the Queen of England in *Anne of a Thousand Days*. They show me the scene, hand me a costume and push me in front of a camera. My five lines are written onto a large white board and held in front of me. Suddenly, it is all over. Once all four nominees have been filmed, we join the rest of the 'stars' in the vast banquet room. Over the first course, videos are shown on a screen above us. The show begins with the red carpet 'interviews' filmed as we, the guests, arrived.

First up is a man called John Richardson. Is he pleased to be nominated for an award tonight, asks the 'reporter'? 'You know, being a stunt man isn't as glamorous as being an actor,' he replies. 'Most of the time, people watching the picture think that it is the actors doing the stunts, so it's good to finally get some recognition.' John's friends, who are sitting at the table next to mine, are loving his interview, applauding every time he speaks. 'Who'd have thought that, in real life, he is just a dull computer programmer?' says one of them. He is right: as more 'stars-for-a-night' are interviewed, I am struck by how competently these people express themselves.

A waiter approaches with a warning: I am about to be 'spotlighted'. I am introduced to the audience, my blushing face appears on the big screen and then, as I squirm with embarrassment in my chair, the film of me, edited (rather badly) into *Anne of a Thousand Days*, is shown. I am also handed a prescribed speech - with blanks so I can say a thank-you to whomever I choose - just in case I am chosen as Best Actress. However, my performance was so wooden that I don't win. Yet now that I know I won't have to make a speech, I feel a moment of real disappointment.

For each questions choose the answer - A, B, C or D.

1. When the writer is waiting to go into Tinseltown Studios, she

- A thinks she has little in common with the other people.
- B wants to find that the claim the company makes is true.
- C fears that the event may go on for too long.
- D is surprised by the appearance of the building.

2 As she goes into the building, the writer

- A gets confused as to who some of the people are.
- B acts as if she really is a star.
- C is unable to respond to certain questions.
- D is impressed by some of the other visitors.

3 What is meant by 'guts' in line 36?

- A experience
- B ambition
- C energy
- D courage

4 What does 'it' (in bold & red) in line 50 refer to?

- A the filming of the writer
- B the white board
- C the filming of all four nominees
- D the writer's last line

5 John Richardson answers the question he is asked by

- A denying an accusation.
- B explaining a change in attitude.
- C expressing satisfaction.
- D admitting to being confused.

6 The writer notices that the other people who are interviewed

- A try to respond in the same way that John Richardson did.
- B try to appear more interesting than they really are.
- C have similar jobs to John Richardson's in real life.
- D have little difficulty in giving good answers to questions.

7 When the writer is 'spotlighted', she

- A finds that she is unable to speak.
- B quickly looks away from the screen.
- C clearly feels uncomfortable.
- D becomes convinced that she will win.

8 When she discovers that she has not won, the writer

- A understands why she was not chosen as the winner.
- B is glad that she will not have to make a speech.
- C wishes she had not agreed to be filmed.
- D regrets not having a better part.

