

She Wanted Everything

Marian Preminger was born in Hungary in 1913, raised in a castle with her aristocratic family, surrounded with maids, tutors, governesses, butlers and chauffeurs.

Her grandmother, who lived with them, insisted that whenever they traveled, they take their own linen, for she believed it was beneath their dignity to sleep between sheets used by common people.

While attending school in Vienna, Marian met a handsome young Viennese doctor. They fell in love, eloped and married when she was only 18. The marriage lasted only a year, and she returned to Vienna to begin her life as an actress.



While auditioning for a play, she met the brilliant young German director, Otto Preminger. They fell in love and soon married. The couple went to America soon thereafter, where he began his career as a movie director. Unfortunately and tragically, Hollywood is a place of dramatic illustrations of people “biting, devouring and consuming” one another. Marian was caught up in the glamor, lights and superficial excitement and soon began to live a sordid life. Preminger, immersed in his own affairs, divorced her.

Marian returned to Europe to live the life of a socialite in Paris. In 1948, she learned through the newspaper that Albert Schweitzer – medical missionary in Africa known for his interpretive life of Jesus – a man she had read about as a little girl, was making one of his periodic visits to Europe and was staying at Gunsbach. She phoned his secretary and was given an appointment to see Dr. Schweitzer the next day. When Marian arrived in Gunsbach, she discovered he was in the village church playing the organ. She listened and turned the pages of music for him.

After a visit, he invited her to have dinner at his house. By the end of the day, she knew she had discovered what she had been looking for all her life. She was with him every day thereafter during his visit, and when he returned to Africa, he invited her to come to Lambarene and work in the hospital.

Marian accepted – and found herself. There in Lambarene, the girl who was born in a castle and raised like a princess, who was accustomed to being waited on with all the luxuries of a spoiled life, became a servant. She changed bandages, bathed babies, fed lepers – and became free. She wrote her autobiography and called it *All I Ever Wanted Was Everything*.

(more)

Marian could not *get* the “everything” that would satisfy and give meaning until she could *give* everything. When she died in 1979, the *New York Times* carried her obituary, which included this statement from her: “Albert Schweitzer said there are two classes of people in this world – the helpers and the non-helpers. I’m a helper.”

Through the careers they have chosen and the everyday practice, associates in Life Care and Century Park are living out this truth.

(Paul speaking:) *“I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’”* (Acts 20:35 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter