



# The Genius and the Goddess: Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe

*Jeffrey Meyers*

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The 1956 wedding of Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller surprised the world. *The Genius and the Goddess* presents an intimate portrait of the prelude to and ultimate tragedy of their short marriage. Distinguished biographer Jeffrey Meyers skillfully explores why they married, what sustained them for five years, and what ultimately destroyed their marriage and her life.

The greatest American playwright of the twentieth century and the most popular American actress both complemented and wounded one another. Marilyn craved attention and success but became dependent on drugs, alcohol, and sexual adventures. Miller experienced creative agony with her. Their marriage coincided with the creative peak of her career, yet private and public conflict caused both of them great anguish.

Meyers has crafted a richly nuanced dual biography based on his quarter-century friendship with Miller, interviews with major players of stage and screen during the postwar Hollywood era, and extensive archival research. He describes their secret courtship. He also reveals new information about the effect of the HUAC anti-Communist witch-hunts on Miller and his friendship with Elia Kazan. The fascinating cast of characters includes Marilyn's co-stars Sir Laurence Olivier, Yves Montand, Montgomery Clift, and Clark Gable; her leading directors John Huston, Billy Wilder, and George Cukor; and her literary friends Dame Edith Sitwell, Isak Dinesen, Saul Bellow, and Vladimir Nabokov.

Meyers offers the most in-depth account of the making and meaning of *The Misfits*. Written by Miller for Monroe, this now-classic film was a personal disaster. But Marilyn remained Miller's tragic muse and her character, exalted and tormented, lived on for the next forty years in his work.

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