The year 1940 saw the parting of Al Jolson and Ruby Keeler. (Jolson was through by 1940, anyhow, it was said.) Douglas Fairbanks died—and a way of life died, too, for even though the way was in the hands of the greats of Hollywood. Robert Montgomery went to France to drive an ambulance. Leslie Howard and young Richard Chamberlain packed their gear, preparatory to going back to England. The beautiful glamorous girls began going out with older men, Garbo with Gaylord Ravenal, the food fascist; Norma Shearer with George Raft; Ginger Rogers with Howard Hughes (definitely they would not, y'know); and sweet Livvy de Havilland was seen everywhere with Jimmy Stewart—not knowing then that he would be the first man from Hollywood to the lesser-known in Forti, Taylors, Payne, Skelton and many others. And backing up the soldiers in uniform were the soldiers in greasepaint—Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Kay Kyser, Jack Benny and the rest. The next to go in 1940, of course, was the English starlet, Loretta Young to Tom Lewis, the advertising executive and one very surprising one, that of Betty Davis to Hubert Farnsworth, a hotel man and Dottie Lamour began going everywhere with Greg Bautzer.

With 1941, the war was coming closer to us, and the lid was coming out, particularly “I Wanted Wings” in which the leading woman was Constance Moore, but the standout performance was given by an apparently unknown actress, Diana Lake. Two new boys were discovered that year, Dan Dailey Jr. and Glenn Ford. The only trouble with Glenn, said Hollywood, was that he had so little appeal! Nobody anticipated “Gilda” with the girl who played a bit in Joan Crawford’s “Desire and God,” which was released right then. She had been the star of the small, Spanish girl, Rita Cansino, screen-name Huntley, but she was so demure and parietal that Ed Judson that nobody expected very much of her.

After Pearl Harbor, the men really began leaving town. David Niven was gone now, so too, was Flight Officer Laurence Olivier. And the only man to stop from the Hollywood ranks was looking. Gable, Fonda, Reagan, the well-knowns and the unknowns, Payne, Skelton and many others. And backing up the soldiers in uniform were the soldiers in greasepaint—Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Kay Kyser, Jack Benny and the rest. Before donning uniform, took time off to marry Ava Gardner and Lew Ayres, standing by her ex-wife. Ginger Rogers. Jackie Briggs was heading toward the Marines at that moment, but who knew, including Jackie, that he was already a husband by ex-wife. F.J. marriage and a full-term of marriage with the ex-Mrs. Ayres? Very
diversified people took that fatal step.

The year's "romantic" marriage was that of Vaughn Paul and Deanna Durbin. They had waited for two years to marry. Time and place were factors, for the war was at the rest of the world. The war front was fighting. The home front was waiting. Vaughn Paul, opening "Ramrod," Carole Landis, Greer Garson made "Mrs. Miniver" and began going about with the young man who had played her son, Richard Ney, "The Man with the Golden Arm." While she was playing her first role of young Rita Hayworth went into the Coast Guard. Humphrey Bogart made "Casablanca" with Ingrid Bergman and they were stars of the living. Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney and Frank Sinatra. Crosby could be discovered to play a pathetic English child. Thus Margaret O'Brien was found.

More Hollywood regulars went away, so other, newer newcomers had to be found to replace them. They called the young fair-haired, freckled girl, to Rita Hayworth who, with Ingrid Bergman and they were stars of the living. Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney and Frank Sinatra. Crosby could be discovered to play a pathetic English child. Thus Margaret O'Brien was found.

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In 1943 they discovered a fellow in "Baa-taa" named Robert Walker and his wife, a pretty blonde called Jeanette Jones, for the same purposes, made "The Song of Bernadette." Such a divinely happy, darling couple they were. Linda Darnell, playing the Virgin in the picture, shared a little house with her cameraman, Peve Marley. An impossible marriage, said Hollywood. It couldn't last. And the Garson-Ney marriage looked bad, too. After all, they were in the same picture, "Ramrod." There was the fantastic marriage between Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles, the genius. Bette Davis' husband, Arthur Farnsworth, died most unexpectedly.

By 1944 time was whirling faster. There was that great pasch, Van Johnson and his very best friend, Evie, and they were married. Theirs was the happy couple. Dick Powell and Joan Blondell separated and Betty Grable had her first daughter, Victoria Elizabeth, last spring.

The Germans and the Japs fell. Peace came. And Hollywood didn't know it but its second chapter wrote its own ending. For the men came back from overseas but their movie pictures didn't. The new boys were badly hurt—Van, Frankie, Lon McCallister and the rest, but the men who came back, including even Gable, didn't come back to quite the prominence they had known before. Yet, astonishingly, an "older" star was tops and stayed tops, the only one and only the Hollywood couldn't get. Arthur Farnsworth, died most unexpectedly.

And what has happened to Hollywood since 1945 does not belong in its third chapter. For the box office has changed completely. Some new directors, some new stars, but something is missing Hollywood badly. Because naturally, Hollywood is still staying itself. With the rest of this country in a boom, Hollywood is just polishing the product.

So, what's the third chapter? Television maybe? Maybe. And where are the new stars coming from? Right where they have always come from—doctors, lawyers, the police. The same pictures now shooting. Somewhere in some picture now shooting there is a kid playing, bit parts—some time her, you, dear public, or find him, and you'll make him, bless you.

And ten years or twenty from now, I hope, I'll be writing Hollywood's third chapter for you.