

Lady
For Ever Marilyn

POOR Norma Jean, you did not seek
To be a firmamental freak –
A super-celluloided star
Whose iridescence reached so far,
You could not find some grateful shade
For Norma Jean, who was afraid
Of all the star-shot, tinselled fame
Around alliterative name.

Poor Norma Jean could not begin
To cope with being Marilyn,
And so surrendered all her ills
To strictly non-galactic pills.

Yet even Death did not presume
To incommode the queen for whom
Poor Norma Jean had paid the toll
In black despair. Her final role,
Enacted on a lonely bed,
Was not an end, but proved instead
That Norma Jean's internal strife
Gave Marilyn eternal life.

Completely undeterred, the queen
Minces minxy on the screen,
Her wiggle and outrageous pout,
As ever, making strong men shout,
While squeaky baby voice implies
An innocence behind those eyes.
In photographs, she still looks cute
In pre-bikini bathing suit,

Or grappling with a skirt and draught
Above a ventilation shaft.
But now, what's this? The papers say

Lady

That she'd be seventy today!*
Technology she'd never seen
Shows the way she would have been –
But isn't: she has found, in truth,
The secret of eternal youth,
Eternal glam, eternal glitz,
Eternal putting on the Ritz.

And all because a sad girl died,
Looking for a place to hide.

* August 5, 1996
