

Helen Reardon is the producer and director of the film *Going North*, based on a novel that had stayed on the bestseller list for 16 months. Helen is considered to be one of the best directors in Hollywood. She already has two Academy Awards to her credit and many hit motion pictures.

Tom Nesson is a promising young actor. His most recent film, *The Western Express*, was well received at the box office and thrust him into the limelight. In fact, one of the reasons he was chosen to play the leading male part in *Going North* was his current popularity. He is considered by industry insiders as a potential superstar.

All went well on the set for the first few weeks. But then problems began to arise. First came arguments between the set-design and wardrobe staff. There were feelings that the sets and the costumes didn't match. Some thought that the colors even clashed at times. The question was, "Whose fault is it?" Of course, each group blamed the other.

Later, the makeup staff walked off the job, claiming that they were being asked to work unreasonable hours. Helen did have a penchant for shooting movies at odd hours, particularly if the scene called for it. The makeup staff claimed that they had an informal agreement with studio management about the hours they would work and that this agreement had been violated. Although studio executives convinced them to return to work, the "peace" was an uneasy one. Now there was this blowup between Helen and Tom. Everyone hoped that the problems between the two were temporary.

The next day, everybody was back on the set on time except Tom. He came in about 10 minutes late. He explained that the makeup people were slow in getting his makeup on. No one questioned this, and they began where they had left off the previous day.

"Take number one. Lights. Camera. Action! ... Take number 9.... Take number 19.... Take number 31...." Finally, Helen yelled "Cut! Tom, we've got to find a way to get this right. We can't go on like this forever. What do you suggest?"

"I suggest you shoot it like it is. The scene was good. I've done it well several times, but you seem to keep finding small things wrong."

"Tom, do you really know what love is? Your acting doesn't show it."

With that Tom exploded. "Yes, I know what love is, but you obviously don't." He then left the set, shouting, "I'm not coming back on the set until you're gone!"

Helen left the set immediately, going straight to the studio executive offices. She barged into the president's office and stated, "Either you get rid of Tom Nesson on this movie, or I go!"

The studio executives were in a quandary. They did not want to lose either Helen or Tom. Neither had a history of being difficult to work with. They were not sure what was causing the problem. This movie seemed to be causing all kinds of problems. They obviously needed to examine all of the circumstances involved in the making of this film.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you suppose is really causing the problem between Helen and Tom? Explain.
2. Discuss the problems between the set design and wardrobe staff and those with the makeup department.
3. Could any of the problems in this case have been prevented? If so, how? How can the problems now be solved?