Hayward, Susan (1918-1975) Encyclopedia Article

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After some years of apprenticeship, stardom and the first of five Oscar nominations came to former photographer's model Susan Hayward with *Smash-Up—The Story of a Woman* (1947). From then on the gifted, husky-voiced, and ravishing redhead, despite playing a range of parts that included sultry temptresses, rich bitches, and intrepid heroines, became uniquely identified with suffering, both harrowing and poignant but always gutsy. A huge box-office draw during the 1950s, she won hearts portraying singer Jane Froman who was crippled in an air crash, was superb as singer Lilian Roth suffering from alcoholism in *I'll Cry Tomorrow* (1956), won her Academy Award for *I Want to Live* (1958) in which she went to the gas chamber, and was the natural choice to star in the remakes of *Back Street* (1961) and *Dark Victory* (retitled *Stolen Hours,* 1963). Born Edythe Marrener in Brooklyn, New York, she suffered much off-screen, too—a stormy marriage, custody battles, and a suicide attempt before dying of a brain tumor at the age of 56.

Further Reading:

Linet, Beverly. *Portrait of a Survivor: Susan Hayward.* New York, Atheneum, 1980.

Shipman, David. *The Great Movie Stars: The International Years.* London, Angus & Robertson, 1980.