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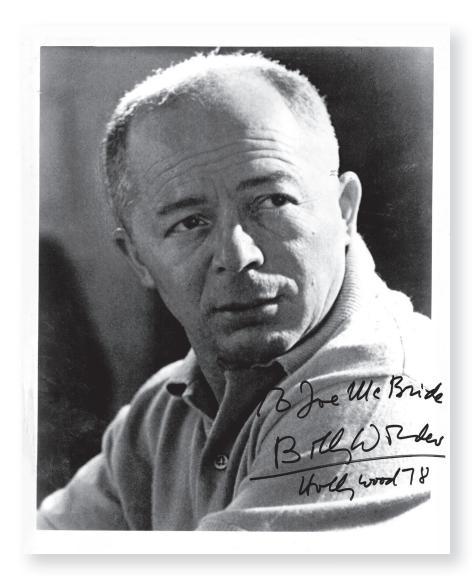
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BILLY WILDER

DANCING ON THE EDGE

JOSEPH McBRIDE

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United Artists/Photofest

Frontispiece: Billy Wilder in a studio publicity photo from the 1950s.

Do you remember my telling you earlier about that rooming house I lived in when I first was trying to get into the movies in Berlin? Well, next to my room was the can, and in it was a toilet that was on the blink. The water kept running all night long. I would lie there and listen to it, and since I was young and romantic, I'd imagine it was a beautiful waterfall—just to get my mind off the monotony of it and the thought of its being a can. Now we dissolve to 25 years later and I am finally rich enough to take a cure at Badgastein [now Bad Gastein], the Austrian spa, where there is the most beautiful waterfall in the whole world. There I am in bed, listening to the waterfall. And after all I have been through, all the trouble and all the money I've made, all the awards and everything else, there I am in that resort, and all I can think of is that goddamned toilet. That, like the man says, is the story of my life.

→ Billy Wilder, 1963

For Ann

