

MARGARET MOLLY BROWN

Episode #2 Transcript

Written by Gabrielle Mirabella

Music by Ernie Bird

GABRIELLE: Hello! And welcome to another episode of “What *will* she do next?” I’m your host Gabrielle Mirabella and together with composer Ernie Bird, (**ERNIE:** Hello!) we’ve created a podcast that celebrates some of our *favorite* historical women! Today’s episode is about using the privileges *you* have to help those who need it the most! This episode was written & performed by myself with music & editing done by Ernie Bird (**ERNIE:** Hello!)

GABBIE & ERNIE: Enjoy!

GABRIELLE: Are you feeling...stuck? Does the challenge presented before you seem pretty “unsolvable”? Or, perhaps, like many of us right now, you feel confined; with no place to go, no room to grow? Well, don’t worry, you’re not alone.

Join us, as we investigate seemingly “impossible” situations from the lives of history’s most famous women, and ask ourselves...what *will* she do next?

THEME SONG PLAYS:

*“What will she do next?
What will she do next?
Her aim is true but will she see it through?
Oh, what will she do... next?”*

GABRIELLE: Today’s historical woman: The “Unsinkable” Margaret Molly Brown.

Now, before she gets too stuck, let’s see where she’s coming from...

Margaret “Molly” Brown was born Margaret Tobin on July 18th, 1867 in the rural town of Hannibal, Missouri. Margaret’s parents, John and Johanna, were Irish-catholic immigrants who believed in the power of educating young women, a belief which was not as common back then as it is today. So, they sent Margaret to a local grammar school, where she attended lessons up until the age of thirteen. But, supporting Margaret and her six siblings was becoming increasingly difficult for her parents, so the teenage Margaret decided to leave school and start work at a local tobacco factory in order to help support her family.

Work at the factory was not easy! Long hours with little pay and intense physical labor left Margaret exhausted.

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MARGARET: *Woof!*

GABRIELLE: But, through this tough experience, Margaret came to a great realization: There were communities, just like Margaret's, all over the country searching for a way out of poverty, but no matter how hard these mostly immigrant families worked, they could never seem to find it. So, Margaret, being the energetic go-getter that she was, made a promise to herself...

MARGARET: One day, I'm gonna find a better life!

GABRIELLE: The spunky teenager thought.

MARGARET: And once I do, I'll use my gifts to help others!

GABRIELLE: About six years later, at the age of nineteen, Margaret joined her brother Daniel in Leadville, Colorado. Margaret had dreamed of a different life, and Leadville, she thought, was where she'd find it! Margaret was just one of many traveling west at this time; like Margaret, many were in search of work, while others were hoping to "hit it big" in the gold and silver mining communities, also known as Boomtowns.

Margaret was not so much interested in mining for gold, but she did need a way to support herself. So she quickly found sewing work at a local shop. And, following her passion for community outreach, Margaret also began work with local charities and soup kitchens.

And it was here in Leadville that Margaret met a man named James "J.J." Brown, a mining superintendent with not much money to his name, but with a whole lot of "big ideas".

J.J.: Ya' gotta think big to be big!

GABRIELLE: Margaret and J.J. soon fell in love, and were married. They had two children named Catherine and Lawrence and looked forward to a simple, quiet life together. But, one day, everything changed, as one of J.J.'s big ideas finally paid off!

J.J.: Told ya!

GABRIELLE: And overnight, Margaret, J.J. and the entire family became millionaires.

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MARGARET: This is it!

GABRIELLE: ...Margaret exclaimed!

MARGARET: This is how I can help!

GABRIELLE: With their newfound wealth, Margaret moved the family to Denver, Colorado, where she began her new life as a “philanthropist”; a person who uses her wealth and privilege to make her community safe and accessible to all of its residents.

MARGARET SINGS.

MARGARET:

WHEN YOU'RE GIVEN A GIFT, YOU SHARE IT!
AND WHEN YOU'RE TAKIN' AN OATH, YOU SWEAR IT!
AND I SWEAR THAT DENVER IS WHERE I'M MEANT TO BE!

RICH WOMAN: Ugh, who is she?

MARGARET:

I AM MARGARET TOBIN BROWN
THE NEWEST GAL IN TOWN!
SOME CALL ME DEFIANT
CAUSE I DON'T SIT STILL OR SILENT.
I SEE THE WORK THAT I MUST DO
I WON'T LOOK AWAY
I'LL USE MY GIFTS TO SEE IT THROUGH
STARTING RIGHT AWAY!
LADIES AND GENTS,
LET THE WORK COMMENCE
LET'S TURN THIS BOOMTOWN AROUND
LET'S TURN THIS BOOMTOWN AROUND!

GABRIELLE: Just as Margaret arrived in Denver, a devastating Silver Crash left the city in chaos, and the poorest of Denver's citizens in desperate need. While the upper crust quietly donated from the safety of their mansions, Margaret rolled up her sleeves and took to the streets.

LITTLE BILLY: Say, Miss, thanks for helpin' out. What's your name, anyways?

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MARGARET:

I AM MARGARET TOBIN BROWN,
AND I WILL NOT SETTLE DOWN
WITH ENDLESS AMBITION
WE WILL COMPLETE THIS MISSION
SEE THE FAMILIES, HEAR THEIR CRY
DON'T JUST LOOK AWAY
WE HAVE A DUTY, YOU AND I
TO HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY!
LADIES AND GENTS
USE YOUR COMMON SENSE
AND LET'S TURN THIS BOOMTOWN AROUND
LET'S TURN THIS BOOMTOWN AROUND.

TRANSITIONAL MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Margaret spent many years working to reverse the damage done to her community, focusing primarily on the safety of children and families. Some of her more successful endeavors were the addition of playgrounds in local parks, and creating summer school opportunities for all children.

Life was good for the wealthy activist, and when not working on social reform, or running for political office, she could often be seen traveling abroad, a luxury afforded to only the most wealthy of Americans. And it was while she was away from home, vacationing in France...

MARGARET: *Bonjour, y'all!*

GABRIELLE: That Margaret received a terrible message...

MARGARET: My Grandson has fallen terribly ill. I must return to America at once!

GABRIELLE: So, Margaret quickly bought a first-class ticket upon the first ocean liner she could find. But, little did she know, the ship she was sailing upon was never to reach American shores, for Margaret was sailing upon the doomed *RMS Titanic*.

TRANSITIONAL MUSIC.

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GABRIELLE: When your greatest challenges appear before you sometimes there is little to no warning. And that is exactly how it happened for Margaret “Molly” Brown, when five days into her voyage upon the *RMS Titanic*, the massive ocean-liner struck an iceberg in the middle of the night and began to sink.

It was a dark and frigid night, as the over 3,000 passengers aboard the sinking ship scrambled to find a way towards safety. Being a First Class passenger, Margaret was quickly offered one of the first lifeboats, but she refused, and began guiding frightened women and children into the small vessels instead...

MARGARET: This way, kiddos!

GABRIELLE: Crewmen urged Brown to board a lifeboat herself, but she remained defiant, wanting only to be of use in the chaotic situation. It was only when a crewman *physically* lifted Brown into a lifeboat...

MARGARET: Hey, what’s the big idea?

GABRIELLE: ... that Brown made it off the ill-fated ship.
As Brown’s lifeboat rowed away to safety, Margaret could see many people still trapped onboard, and others swimming in the icy cold waters.

MARGARET: Is this the right thing to do?

GABRIELLE: Margaret thought.

MARGARET: Yes, I have my own children and grandchildren waiting for me on dry land, but out here, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean there are so many people that need my help! What will I do?

UPBEAT MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Good question, Margaret. What *will* you do?
Before we find out, let’s first take a look at her options....
Will Margaret choose option 1?:

MARGARET: I’ve made my decision, I am going to keep rowing this lifeboat towards dry land and pray that help comes to those people quickly.

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GABRIELLE: Or, will Margaret choose option 2?:

MARGARET: This lifeboat is getting us nowhere, let me just pull out my toolbox and turn it into a hot air balloon!

GABRIELLE: Or, will Margaret choose option 3?:

MARGARET: Those people have families of their own. I have to go back and help them!

GABRIELLE: Now, that we can clearly see Margaret's options, which one do YOU think she'll choose? Will she keep rowing to safety? Will she magically fly away? Or, will Margaret turn back and help? Take a moment to think it over...

THINKING MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Alright, got your answer? Now, let's find out which option Margaret will choose...

MARGARET: Those people have families of their own on dry land! I have to go back
and help!

I SEE THE WORK THAT I MUST DO!

I WON'T LOOK AWAY!

ALTHOUGH IT'S TOUGH, I'LL SEE IT THROUGH

I WON'T BE AFRAID!

LADIES AND GENTS,

LET THE WORK COMMENCE!

LET'S TURN THIS LIFE BOAT AROUND, TURN THIS LIFE BOAT AROUND!

GABRIELLE: The "Unsinkable" Margaret Molly Brown, was faced with a seemingly impossible task. But, instead of hiding from the problem, she faced it head on. So, the next time you find yourself feeling "stuck", I wonder...what will *you* do next?

KIDS CORNER MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: At the end of every episode we will be featuring a very special guest star...*you!* Today we have Tulia from New York.

GABRIELLE & ERNIE: Hi, Tulia!

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GABRIELLE: Tell us all about your favorite historical woman!

TULIA: The name of my favorite historical woman is Cleopatra. Cleopatra was born in 69 B.C. She grew up in Egypt and was born there, too. Cleopatra is most remembered for being the last Queen of Egypt and one of the greatest. One thing that inspires me about Cleopatra is that she was a good leader and she was a role model. When all seemed lost she was like, 'No! I won't give up! Sorry, but I'm just gonna keep walking until I get to what I want!' Well, not really what she wanted, really what she needed.

End of Episode.