

The SECRET STUDIO

By Hazel Livingston
CHAPTER 1.

She used to pretend she wasn't really one of the family.

She didn't look like them—not very much. Blue eyes and black lashes—the boys had them, too, and fine white skin, like ma's; bright brown hair like Gerie's, just different. Awfully different.

Sometimes she would pretend she was a princess royal, with the velvet couch cover for a train. And then again, she would be a great artist's child—Sarah Bernhardt's, Paderewski's, Pavlova's—given to the Merions to raise. But she knew it was only pretending. Poor people didn't adopt extra babies when they had five already, and she was the youngest of six. Besides, it was only in books that babies were found on door steps. In real life it was only kittens.

There was something of the kitten about her, too. Her wide-eyed, heart-shaped little face. The slim suppleness of her. Her love for the fine things of life. Warmth and sunshine, delicate dishes, silken cushions, the feel of furs. The luxuries there were so few of in the narrow frame house that was home.

She was thinking of them now—the things she wanted. But life, the things she was going to get or know the reason why. But she went on beating the mayon-

cool efficiency. Did artists paint calmly, coolly, "washing up" as they went? Not! And neither could she. Rosemary understood ma as well—she turned her head to hide the understanding grin. Ma didn't want the family to know she really LIKED to cook!

How good everything looked. Roast lamb with new peas and crackly brown potatoes, crab salad half smothered in the golden mayonnaise. Home-made lemon sherbet in the old freezer. And surely a birthday cake and candles.

Pa had picked his choicest flowers for the center of the table and Gerie had polished the silver. A wave of yearning love for them all, pa and ma and Gerie and the boys, swept over Rosemary; a longing to do something for them, for every one of them—they'd done so much for her.

But she couldn't find any words to express it. She ate silently, in dreamy detachment, smiling vaguely at Joe's wisecracks and Frank's account of how he told the boss where to head in.

And I says to him: "If I'm head of this here shipping department I gotta have co-operation. I gotta run it, see? I can't get no service out of the boys unless I get the hiring and firing. Now take the thing." He paused to sip his coffee.

"Is the meat tender?" interrupted ma, anxiously. "Oh, see the tough-

thing foolish, for once."

She held it against her as she talked. Dear old Gerie, who had never had anything foolish, never done anything foolish.

"Well, if this is going to be a fashion talk!" Frank lit a cigarette and prepared to leave.

Joe grinned at Rosemary, worshipping at the shrine of beauty, and hurried after him. They always went out in the evenings.

Ma cut three generous wedges of cake. "For Ernest."

Ernest was the oldest son, married. He lived next door.

She put a clean napkin over the plate and padded out the back way. The screen door slammed again. Pa was following.

The girls were left alone. Rosemary held the little pink hat against her cheek, the lovely, lovely thing.

"Gertie."

"Yes, lovey."

"Gertie, I almost wish you hadn't bought it. It—it doesn't seem right. When I think of how hard you've worked, and the boys and all—and me—just taking every-

thing—going to college—"

"Rosemary, don't be silly! After all, you're the baby. And don't you suppose we get a kick out of it, knowing you are getting the education and the fun and everything we'd like to have had?"

"Fun! Good Lord, Gertie! Fun?"

"Fun! When she had no sorority pin, no bid to the sophomore

does anyone ever know anything unless they just plunge in and—Oh, I don't know start living—"

"I want to meet people. Get new ideas. See things. Love and be loved—truly, I mean. Not just get married—not just a hopechest and a mahogany bedroom set and pink guest towels like some girls are satisfied with. I want the real things."

Rosemary's arms were outstretched—her rose-white youth aflame.

Rosemary sat on the back steps in the accented darkness. Pa had been watering his flowers. Their drenched fragrance hung in the air. Pa's garden always made Rosemary want to cry. It was so sweet, so wistfully lovely with the high board fence all around, shutting out the narrow street on one side, and Millie's clothealines on the other.

Gardening was Pa's one talent. Everything he planted grew. And he planted nearly everything. Spicy pinks crowded young tomatoes, Daffodils, pecked yellow heads through a jungle of China lilies and hyacinths. An old man's garden, stiff and prim despite the luxuriance of the lilies, and the tangle of berry vines in the rear.

It was one of those still, warm nights that stray into late Spring, milder than Summer. Rosemary sat there on the steps, with the kitchen door between her and the family life inside, and the street fence between her and the street.

Scrap of conversation came up from the sidewalk on the other side of the fence. Hurrying footsteps. Little bursts of laughter. A couple stopped near the gate. Stilled giggles, a boy's voice, coaxing. Then footsteps slower, gentler.

Rosemary sighed. Not that she wanted kisses in the dark . . . on the street. But it made her lonely. Here she was, 18 years old, and life slipping through her fingers. She hugged her knees closer. Maybe she'd never have romance, beauty . . . all the things she wanted. Maybe nobody would ever really care for her.

Maybe she'd never even be engaged like Gertie. Maybe she'd live and die an old maid. Unwanted! She jumped up in a panic, and the garden trowel Pa had left on the step went clattering to the cement walk below.

The kitchen door opened.

"Oh, it's you!" It was Millie, Ernest's wife. "I thought it was burglars!"

Rosemary came into the light blinking. She hated Millie, and her pointed tongue, her nervous laugh, and the stream of self-pity that dripped constantly menacingly like a leaky faucet. Just as if it was Ernest's fault that the railroad paid small salaries, and she was sickly.

Ma was putting up the lunches at the kitchen table. She did it every night after supper. Five of them, Pa's, Frank's, Joe's, Gerie's and Rosemary's. Rosemary loathed carrying lunches, but it was the one thing Ma was adamant about. She distrusted lunch counters and school cafeterias. She wanted to know what her children ate!

Rosemary picked up the waxed paper and began to wrap the sandwiches. Millie looked on in gloomy silence.

"That's what I ought to be doing," she said at last. "I came over to ask if you had any sardines I could borrow for Ernest."

Ma took a can from her well-filled shelf and set it on the kitchen table.

"Thanks!" said Millie. "I know you'd have them. I said to Ernest, I said, 'I'll go over and borrow one from your mother. She has a branch grocery store in her pantry, and start. Oh, Lord, the sandwiches I've made. If Ernest ever makes enough so he can buy his groceries downtown I'll be glad.'"

Mrs. Merton took five bananas out of the paper bag on the table and added them to the little mound of cookies Rosemary was wrapping. She was wishing Millie would go. "How's Patsy?" she asked.

"Oh, Patricia is coming down with a cold again. I suppose it will be flu. Poor me. I just get through one siege and then I start on another. As I said to Ernest tonight, 'Your mother's six were healthy, but if I had six like Patricia I'd be in my grave.'"

"Mrs. Eames is ailing again. I wouldn't be surprised if it was tuberculosis. Did you ever notice that dry cough she has?"

"No, I never did." Ma wiped her hands on the roller towel and sat down. Emma would stay an hour. She was all excited, expecting Philip home tonight. But I suppose that's no news . . . Rosemary . . . what's your hurry? What are you running away for? He isn't here yet!"

The telltale color rushed to her face . . . Philip . . . home! She put down the string she was tying. A pulse began to throb inside her . . . strong, compelling, like an electric current. The sad loneliness was gone and in its place a mad, happy pounding. Philip . . . who had been away for nearly two years.

Without a word she rushed from the room. They heard her running up the uncarpeted stairs, the door of the girl's room slam.

"So that's how it is! Hm. She has it bad. Well, I'm not surprised. I saw him saying goodbye when he left. I happened to be looking out the window . . . holding hands like kids, and then him giving her a peck on the lips like a trained canary? I had to laugh, but I said to Ernest, 'that's your future brother-in-law. You could have saved yourself the fancy education,' I said. 'She won't need it!'" She laughed, that tremulous, nervous laugh all the Merions but Ernest had.

Ma's face was red. Her voice was getting loud. "Indeed! It's a nice future you pick out for my

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daughter, I must say! Because they happened to grow up on the same block . . . a no-account bum, that wouldn't stay in school, and wouldn't hold a job and . . . and Millie began to laugh again.

"And only yesterday . . . she held her side . . . 'you were telling me Rosemary had the itch to leave college and be a stenographer . . . ' 'Secretary—private secretary!'"

"Yes—they all are. But I wouldn't put it past Rosemary. She's ambitious. I'm sure I wish your whole family was. Ernest don't seem so crazy to rise in the world. Maybe a bookkeeper is more genteel than a storekeeper on a ship. But I don't think so. I'm sure I wouldn't mind if my husband was on a ship, drawing down good money, like Phil sent Mrs. Eames for Christmas, and not home every night for a big supper. At least Rosemary wouldn't have to put up lunches for him, if she did give up her career of PRIVATE SECRETARY for him!"

Mrs. Merton sat silent. She'd fight with her own family, but not her in-laws.

Millie's bosom rose and fell rapidly. She was a stout woman in spite of her thin, emaciated face. "I'm sorry I mentioned it," she said, breathing fast. "I didn't know it was a sore subject. And if Phil is no good, it's just the war that spoiled him. He was a nice enough boy before. It spoiled a lot of good men. Knocked the ambition right out of them!"

Mrs. Merton knew that last was for Ernest. As if it had been the WAR that had taken the heart out of Ernest! Marriage and a shrewish wife, that was it!

The sounds of it came up to Rosemary, feverishly dressing. She was putting on the pink sport suit she had thought she'd never enjoy wearing! But this . . . This made everything seem different. This wiped away the doubt and the hunger and heartache. This . . . This . . . would make everything come right.

She put just a drop of Gertie's violet perfume behind her ears and the violet drop on her nose . . . so she could smell it herself. Now she had . . . the soft pinkness of it. Close to the brown bud, she'd like it . . . surely he'd like it.

She tiptoed down the stairs gingerly, avoiding the creaks. Voices still in the kitchen. She'd just walk over toward the Eames'. It might be all wrong. He might not be coming home tonight at all. Or not till late! He might . . . have forgotten! He hadn't written to tell her.

She stood hesitating . . . twisting her hands together . . . All the racing warmth draining from her heart. The old fear again . . . the loneliness crowding.

Someone was coming. Someone young, who hurried. But young people hurried by the hundreds, old people, all kinds of people. The street was a thoroughfare now . . . business crowding in. One by one the old houses were being torn down. She forced herself to think of that . . . anything to keep from hoping too much . . .

"Philip!" Rosemary was in luck. A shabby, thrifty gangle, her arms outstretched.

"Rosemary!" It was like a prayer. "Rosemary, darling, have you been true to your old man?"

The same old Phil . . . looking just the same. A little browner, a little thinner, a little better dressed.

He slipped his arm into hers . . . laughing a little . . . as if he had seen her yesterday, and loved her more than ever. "Come on, old girl, let's get out of here. We'll have all the old ladies in the neighborhood on our necks in a minute . . . come—I want to talk to you . . . I want to tell you about the cherry blossoms in Japan . . . we'll see them together some time, honey. Beautiful geishas . . . but not so beautiful as my girl. Kiss me . . . Here! Don't laugh! You'll wake up the cop on the beat. There! That's better! . . . Listen, honey, the little shavers, flying kites . . ."

The little minutes slipped by and the hours, each one twice blessed. He brought her back to the door at midnight.

"Hope the family haven't worried!"

The family! Rosemary came back to earth. The cherry blossom faded . . . She was back home! The porch light showed the pink sport suit . . . just a bit crushed. Ma would be sitting up . . . but no matter. Phil's kisses were warm on her cheek.

(Continued tomorrow)

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To Mothers: Musterole is also made in milder form for babies and small children. Ask for Children's Musterole.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES PLANS AT CRESCENT CITY

(Associated Press Local Wire.)

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 15.—Crescent City, located on the northern California coast, near the Oregon line, will be the scene of intensive naval airplane photographic operations within the next thirty days, preparatory to the establishment of a cardinal naval aviation base at the point, according to the Examiner.

The planes and crew, comprising the engineering staff of the Pacific battle fleet, will leave for Lake Earl, proposed base, within a fortnight and will work under the direction of Commander Karl Smith. The mosaic operations will be directed by Lieutenant Ben H. Wyatt, who will take with him the identical crew he commanded in the mapping expedition of the Alaskan Littoral last summer.

In co-operation with the navy department, the war department has inspected the location with a view of adding such harbor works as may be necessary to facilitate the naval plans and an appropriation of \$1,578,750 will be asked of the next congress to construct harbor works sufficient to handle naval traffic, the paper says.

SHORT TALKS BY THOUGHTFUL MOTHERS

A Pennsylvania mother speaks first: "I know the worth of Poley's Honey and Tar Compound. We used it for years, and it never failed us. But groups of children, feverish colds, disturbing night coughs, it gives us a feeling of security to have Poley's Honey and Tar Compound in the house." No opiates, no chloroform, made under rigid sanitary control, Poley's Honey and Tar Compound carries a strong appeal to thoughtful mothers everywhere. Ask for it. Sold everywhere.

PRIZES AWARDED TO WESTERNERS NEW YORK RODEO

NEW YORK, Nov. 15.—Cowboys and cowgirls who competed in the charity rodeo held in the great open spaces in Madison Square Garden during the past two weeks, pulled up stakes last night and hit the trail for the west.

Hugh Strickland of Brunson Valley, Idaho, carried with him the Roosevelt trophy, the Ken Maynard trophy and the decision of the judges that he was the best all-around cowboy competing. Mike Hastings of Iowa Park, Texas, took \$1200 in cash and a silver cup awarded for first prize in the steer wrestling contest.

Louis Jones of Cristobal, Texas, was awarded \$1200 and a silver cup as the best calf roper. Bob Akin of Miles City, Mont., came in first in the broncho-riding finals and was awarded a prize of \$1,000. Chester Byers of Fort Worth, Texas, won the grand prize of \$1,000 for trick and fancy roping and now bears the title of champion trick roper of the world. Ted Elder of Denver, Colo., won \$1,000 for fancy riding.

In the cowgirl competition, Grace Runyon of Spearfish, S. D., was awarded the first prize of \$700 for broncho riding, and Tad Lucas of Douglas, Wyo., won \$1,000 for fancy riding.

"Tin Gods." The title's significant for more than one reason. Principally because it figures as a milestone in Thomas Meighan's career.

The picture had its first showing Sunday at the Antlers theatre, and an immense audience was introduced to a brand new Tom Meighan.

Aiding and abetting him in his efforts, is a team cast headed by the two featured players, Aileen Pringle and Renee Adoree; William Powell, Hale Hamilton and John Harrington. Allan Dwan directed. William Anthony McGuire is the author of the play from which it was adapted by Paul Dickey and Howard Emmett Rogers.

Imagine the story of a man who marries a beautiful woman. She loves him but also has a passion for politics. Time passes and soon she has forgotten her first love for the second. A child comes but she continues to spend her time away from home. After a terrible argument, the husband packs his bags, and rushes to South America.

At a small town which has sprung up because of the building of a bridge, he finds solace in rum. Losing his position as engineer in charge of the structure, he sinks deeper and deeper. Sickness comes but he is nursed back to health by a native girl.

Here's drama that pierces the emotions. And when you see it you'll never—oh, what's the use? See "Tin Gods."

LIBERTY THEATRE

"Sparrows" Called Mary's Greatest

Mary Pickford, who has made a score of screen masterpieces and bought pleasure to millions, has just completed a picture which is said by many critics to be the best of her career.

The picture is "Sparrows," a

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United Artists Corporation release, and it is at the Liberty theatre for two more days.

The role of Mamma Mollie offers to Mary Pickford a splendid opportunity. At times she is an imphish, mischievous little hoyden, and yet again the tender mother heart yearning over the sorrows of the babies and comforting them with stolen dreams and magic kisses. There is no finer raiment for "The World's Sweetheart" in this picture, no gorgeous costumes nor fairy princess. Qualifier than Anne Rooney, sweeter than ever, until the very end of the picture, she is tattered and torn, barelegged, ragged, but radiant.

There is not a dull moment in the story, and the picture is brimming with comedy. It has punch and thrills and suspense—everything a successful picture needs, and in addition it has the one and only Mary Pickford.

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"Come on, old girl, let's get out of here," cried Phil, Rosemary's first love, as he greeted her after his long absence.

nausea rhythmically, carefully, not spilling a drop.

Rosemary was like that—practical. She never let day dreams interfere with facts. She imagined brilliant futures for herself, but she knew they wouldn't just happen. You had to make them happen.

Make things happen. But how could you, when you didn't have any money, or position, or anything? You couldn't compete with the other girls who had things. And what was the sense of going on and on at college when you didn't care anything about studies and didn't want to teach in the end?

Going on never having any decent clothes, in spite of ma's pressing and pinching and scratching and making over, being left out of everything—the sororities, the dances and class doings—the only things she cared about. Pretending. Pretending she didn't care about them. Pretending to the family, too. Letting them think she loved college, when she hated it, hated everything about it.

"There, that's enough. Just put it on the salad, will you, lovey?" Ma bustled over to look at the mayonnaise and add a dash of paprika and just a drop more lemon. She liked to add the finishing touches herself. Then she knew it would be good.

"Let's see, when did I put the meat in? Oh, yes, it's done. There's your father at the front door. Call the boys, Gertie's late again. I hate to have you helping on your birthday!"

Rosemary smiled, she mustn't let ma know she was blue. Rosemary's smile was almost the nicest thing about her. Pure sunshine, lighting her whole face.

A sensitive red mouth and fine white skin, primrose pink over the cheek bones. Rosemary knew her was a pretty face, knew that her supple, slender body was pretty, too; but what GOOD did it do her? Who cared? What was prettiness without clothes or social position or anything?

She pushed her hair impatiently back and went to call the boys. The whole house was odorously with the birthday dinner. The tantalizing smell of freshly made coffee hung in the hall. You could scent the cakes, its warm sweetness lingered, and the roast sizzling in its own juice.

Ma was just taking it out of the oven when she came back from calling the boys. She looked young for her sixty years. She must have been awfully pretty once, as pretty as Rosemary. She had the same clear eyes, the same pink fresh nose. Only her snow white pompadour and heavy, shapeless figure betrayed her age.

The cluttered kitchen was hot. Little heads of moisture stood out on her high, white forehead. Cooking was a ritual with her. She had no patience with Gertie's ineffective efforts to help her Rosemary's

piece you gave her, on her birthday, too!"

"Pa began to sputter. 'Tough! Tough! When I picked it out—especially!'"

"Oh ma, don't. It's perfectly wonderful, isn't it, Gert? Only I'm anxious to get to the cake. Every-body ready?"

"How do you know there's cake? This front pa, heavily playful. 'Cake! And eggs 42 cents the dozen—no, Gertie, leave my knife! Yes, I do want it! I don't care if you don't eat cake with your knife. I do!'"

"Pa!"

"On Rosemary's birthday! See, lovey, I made a chocolate cake. Would you rather have had a banana shortcake? But I thought it would look so nice with the pink candles—you do like it, lovey?"

"Take it! Of course! I adore it!" Rosemary's face was flushed. The lights on the cake were blurring, if only they wouldn't argue all the time.

"Come, let's see the presents!" Joe pushed back his plate and grinned expectantly at Rosemary.

"Present!" corrected Gertie. "You see, I knew what you wanted, or I thought I did—you can change it if it isn't right—so we thought we'd all chip in and get it for you, all."

Rosemary made a leap for the big pasteboard box on the couch near the window. They all crowded round as swiftly, carefully, she laid back the tissue paper.

Her heart began to beat fast—something brand new—not home-made! Oh, it couldn't be. They couldn't afford it, not even all of them together—but it was! The pink jersey sport suit she had wished over in Spaulding's window.

She reached out and touched it carefully. Her eyes filled with tears. She looked at the box, half unpacked. Then at ma, with the old fashioned kitchen apron tied round her waist. Pa, with the frayed cuffs and the ready-made tie askew. Gertie in her home-made brown silk that sagged in front and had her arms look like plump sausages, ready to burst in brown silk skin.

And there in its crisp tissue paper wrappings, the pink sport suit and matching hat of soft French felt. Lying on the faded red couch where pa stored every night after dinner. Near the table with the cracked dishes. So, so different.

A sob choked her. She hid her head in the dingy sofa cushions in an agony of embarrassment, jumping up and hugged them till half laughing, half crying.

Gertie, used to Rosemary's "babyishness," as the family called it, went right on explaining: "Size 16, so I felt sure it would fit. And with your new tan shoes, and white, of course, later on, for summer. As I said to ma, after this season we can give it. I wanted you to have something you really wanted. Some-

her a bunch of violets on her birthday! When Sally Fuller and that crowd she liked so much dropped her flat, when they found out where she lived, and how poor she was—and"

"Rosemary, don't swear! It isn't funny!"

Something seemed to break in Rosemary. All the pent up rebellion, all the resentment against being poor and a "nobody," welled up and broke the barriers. Gertie, who had once been eighteen and pretty—Gertie, beaten and not knowing it, thinking it was fun for her to put up a losing battle, and in the end be beaten—like Gertie. Going under for the last time—and stopping to argue about swearing as if Good Lord was swearing anyway.

"Oh, don't be ridiculous. Any-one would think this was an old lady's house. That's what it is. It's where we're going to end, anyhow. I'd like to know what else we have to look forward to."

Gertie held out her left hand, where a small diamond in a high white gold setting winked almost defiantly.

"Oh, that! If you mean Al and his old engagement ring. Do you think anything will ever come of that after ten years? If you loved him, why didn't you marry him? Oh, the family needed you—I needed you, too, to put me through school. I know. I hate families! I hate them! I hate them! They strangle you and cripple you—and what for? Look at you, Gertie, teaching school, pounding arithmetic into other women's children—when you ought to have five of your own by this time!"

"No, I won't stop. I'm going to finish. Family, family, family! I'm sick of seeing you put out your wedding for the family. I'm sick of seeing you all do things for me—buying me expensive, wonderful clothes that I haven't any place to wear—that makes me feel like a fool, walking into this house with!"

She was crying now, hoarse, racking sobs. Oh, why wouldn't Gertie understand? Didn't she know how much she loved them? Didn't she know that she was the only one of them—and how lost and lonely she was—how she wanted to look ahead and see nothing—nothing at all—unless she got out and fought for it?

"Gertie, I can't go on like this. I just can't. I've got to be independent. Break loose. I'm going to quit college and get a job; it's the only way. I want it."

"You don't know what you want!"

"I do! I want to live! I want to get out into the real world, where things happen. I don't care if I get lost and make mistakes. I don't care if—I go wrong," as Aunt Kitty would put it."