



Natalie Wood

Gavin Lambert

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She spent her life in the movies. Her childhood is still there to see in *Miracle on 34th Street*. Her adolescence in *Rebel Without a Cause*. Her coming of age? Still playing in *Splendor in the Grass* and *West Side Story* and countless other hit movies. From the moment Natalie Wood made her debut in 1946, playing Claudette Colbert and Orson Welles's ward in *Tomorrow Is Forever* at the age of seven, to her shocking, untimely death in 1981, the decades of her life are marked by movies that—for their moments—summed up America's dreams.

Now the acclaimed novelist, biographer, critic and screenwriter Gavin Lambert, whose twenty-year friendship with Natalie Wood began when she wanted to star in the movie adaptation of his novel *Inside Daisy Clover*, tells her extraordinary story. He writes about her parents, uncovering secrets that Natalie either didn't know or kept hidden from those closest to her. Here is the young Natalie, from her years as a child actress at the mercy of a driven, controlling stage mother ("Make Mr. Pichel love you," she whispered to the five-year-old Natalie before depositing her unexpectedly on the director's lap), to her awkward adolescence when, suddenly too old for kiddie roles, she was shunted aside, just another freshman at Van Nuys High. Lambert shows us the glamorous movie star in her twenties—*All the Fine Young Cannibals*, *Gypsy* and *Love with the Proper Stranger*. He writes about her marriages, her divorces, her love affairs, her suicide attempt at twenty-six, the birth of her children, her friendships, her struggles as an actress and her tragic death by drowning (she was always terrified of water) at forty-three.

For the first time, everyone who knew Natalie Wood speaks freely—including her husbands Robert Wagner and Richard Gregson, famously private people like Warren Beatty, intimate friends such as playwright Mart Crowley, directors Robert Mulligan and Paul Mazursky, and Leslie Caron, each of whom told the author stories about this remarkable woman who was both life-loving and filled with despair.

What we couldn't know—have never been told before—Lambert perceptively uncovers. His book provides the richest portrait we have had of Natalie Wood.

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