

**CUPIDS
UNDERSTUDY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649524877

Cupids Understudy by Edward Salisbury Field & Will Grefe

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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EDWARD SALISBURY FIELD & WILL GREFE

**CUPIDS
UNDERSTUDY**

To Hon Jaime
with affection
from
Edward Strawberry.



WILL GREFF
'59

ELIZABETH

CUPID'S UNDERSTUDY

BY
EDWARD SALISBURY FIELD
AUTHOR OF
"A Six-Cylinder Courtship"

Illustrations by
WILL GREFFÉ

NEW YORK
W. J. WATT & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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Published October

6-11-2

CUPID'S UNDERSTUDY

Chapter One.

IF Dad had been a coal baron, like Mr. Tudor Carstairs, or a stock-watering captain of industry, like Mrs. Sanderson-Spear's husband, or descended from a long line of whisky distillers, like Mrs. Carmichael Porter, why, then his little Elizabeth (that's me) would have been allowed to sit in the seat of the scornful with the rest of the Four Hundred, and this story would never have been written. But Dad wasn't any of these

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things; he was just an old love who had made seven million dollars by the luckiest fluke in the world.

Everybody in southern California knew it was a fluke, too, so the seven millions came in for all the respect that would otherwise have fallen to Dad. Of course we were celebrities, in a way, but in a very horrid way. Dad was Old Tom Middleton, who used to keep a livery-stable in San Bernardino, and I was Old Tom Middleton's girl, "who actually used to live over a livery-stable, my dear!" It sounds fearfully sordid, doesn't it?

But it wasn't sordid, really, for I never actually lived over a stable. Indeed, we had the sweetest cottage in all San Bernardino. I remember it

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so well: the long, cool porch, the wonderful gold-of-Ophir roses, the honeysuckle where the linnets nested, the mocking birds that sang all night long; the perfume of the jasmine, of the orange-blossoms, the pink flame of the peach trees in April, the ever-changing color of the mountains. And I remember Ninette, my little Creole mother, gay as a butterfly, care-free as a meadow-lark. 'Twas she who planted the jasmine.

My little mother died when I was seven years old. Dad and I and my old black mammy, Rachel, stayed on in the cottage. The mocking-birds still sang, and the linnets still nested in the honeysuckle, but nothing was ever quite the same again. It was