

How I Became an Actress

Erica Plouffe Lazure

One year, for my birthday, Dad pulled the yellow painted birdhouse off the branch outside our house, sliced off the backside, and called it a dollhouse. He wrapped it in the funny papers we usually saved for kindling and wished me a happy birthday. My dolls, leggy, sloe-eyed Barbies, were mostly too tall to stand in the one-room house, but they sat naked or in preposterous plastic heels and gauze dresses, drinking from imaginary teacups and complimenting the host on her moon-shaped window, careful not to get leftover bird poop stuck in their billowing hair. A few days later, when he came home from work, Dad took an empty tin of sardines and, with his pocket knife, crafted it into a tiny shaky table and placed it inside the dollhouse. I discovered a Barbie could fit through the moon window, and for a while the dollhouse was a spaceship, the tin table the control station. Then Dad cut two pink gauzy rectangles from one of mom's old dresses, stapled one edge over a soda straw, curtain-style, and then tacked the straw to the open side of the birdhouse: a theater. The dollhouse was now home to princesses and witches, runaways and motherless orphans, their stories unfolding as the gauze curtains parted, taking us to Frog Hollow, to Atlantis, to Neverland.

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THE ONE WHO CAN SAY,
'WHAT'S KEPT YOU?'"



CONSUMPTION

(tiny SPOON)

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