



THE
**GREEN
GLASS**
SEA



ELLEN KLAGES

November 15

TRAVELING

DEWEY KERRIGAN SITS on the concrete front steps of Mrs. Kovack's house in St. Louis, waiting for her father. He is in Chicago—war work—and she has not seen him since the Fourth of July. It's almost Thanksgiving now. She looks toward the corner every few seconds.

She is small for her age, thin and wiry, with dark, unruly hair and big front teeth that she has not quite grown into. Her eyes are large and gray-green behind a pair of steel-framed glasses. Her right foot is in a brown shoe that laces up one side, her left in an ordinary saddle shoe.

"Oh, for the love of Pete, will you just come inside?" says Mrs. Kovack. She has opened the front door and stands holding a red-striped dishtowel in one hand and a glass mixing bowl in the other. "You're going to catch your death out here."

Dewey sighs and looks longingly at the wide wooden porch of her Nana's house, next door, where she lived until last Friday. "I'm fine," she says. Mrs. Kovack's house smells like sour pickles and sick-sweet perfume, and she would rather be a little cold. But she doesn't say this, doesn't want to be rude to Mrs. Kovack, who has been doing her good Christian duty by taking Dewey in. Or so she tells Dewey, every chance she gets.

"Well suit yourself," Mrs. Kovack says with a little huff. Then, under her breath, as if Dewey can't hear her from five feet away, she adds, "No wonder poor old Mrs. Gallucci had a stroke, with sass from the likes of you." She closes the door with more force than necessary, to show Dewey that she does not approve. But Dewey already knows.

Dewey turns to make sure her suitcase is still there. No one else has been on the porch, but it is all she has. One brown suitcase and a Marshall Field's shopping bag. She moves the bag a fraction of an inch, so its corners line up square with the edge of the top step, and pulls her good wool coat tighter around her. She looks down Hollis Street, toward the newsstand on the corner, hoping for a glimpse of Papa's big green Studebaker.

Five minutes later a car turns the corner. Not a green Studebaker, just a black Ford. She expects it to drive by, but it pulls up at the curb in front of Nana's house. A

woman in a green army uniform, a WAC, gets out, looks at a piece of paper in her hand, then up at the house number. She sees Dewey and strides quickly up the walk, tugging at her skirt to straighten it.

"Is this the Gallucci house?" she asks.

Dewey shakes her head. "Next door."

"Oh. Well, I'm looking for a Du—" She looks down at her paper again. "Miss Kerrigan?"

"I'm Dewey," Dewey says, and a little wave of fear makes her stomach flutter and then knot. Why would an army person be here, unless something has happened to Papa?

"Is Papa okay?" she asks in a voice that trembles, just a little.

"What? Oh, no, it's not that, honey." The WAC smiles. "He's fine. Just a little busy right now. The war, you know. So they sent me to pick you up. I'm Corporal Beckwith. Margaret." She smiles again. "Is that all your things?"

Dewey looks at her suitcase and nods.

"Okey-dokey, then. You go say good-bye to your grandmother while I put your gear in the trunk."

"Nana had to go to the Home," says Dewey quietly. "This is just the neighbor's house."

"Oh." Margaret seems startled by this news. "Oh. I'm sorry. Do you want to say good-bye to your neighbor then?"

SURROUNDED BY SECRETS

It is 1943, and while war consumes the United States and the world, eleven-year-old Dewey Kerrigan lives with her father in a town that—officially—doesn't exist: Los Alamos, New Mexico. Famous scientists and mathematicians, including Dewey's father, work around the clock on a secret project everyone there calls only "the gadget." Meanwhile, Dewey works on her own mechanical projects, and locks horns with Suze Gordon, a budding artist who is as much of a misfit as she is. None of them—not J. Robert Oppenheimer, the director of the Manhattan Project; not the mathematicians and scientists; and least of all, Dewey and Suze—knows how much "the gadget" is about to change their lives. . . .

"A warmhearted book that handles gently and wisely the pain of being an outsider and the difficult joys of making a friend. . . . The moral resonance of the story is subtle and haunting." —Ursula K. Le Guin



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