

# screen legend's **CHARMED** and **CURSED** life



second daughter, Christina, was born in 1948. But Tierney continued to work at breakneck speed, and once again she and her husband drifted apart and finally divorced. Tierney soon plunged into a crushing downward spiral.

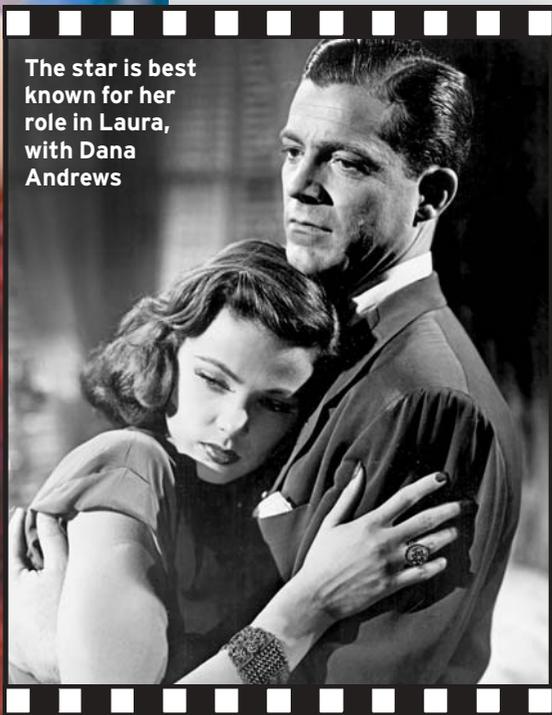
"In the early 1950s, Gene developed intense mood swings, which turned into paranoid neurosis," says Vogel.

"She could no longer remember her movie lines, and was confused and aggravated. Gene retreated to New York, and was suspended by her studio."

In 1954, the troubled star was admitted to a sanitarium. During her 18 months there, she underwent electric-shock therapy. After 32 shock treatments, years of her life were erased from her mind, and she couldn't recognize members of her own family.

In 1958, Tierney was again admitted to a

The star is best known for her role in *Laura*, with Dana Andrews



mental hospital, where they administered "ice treatments."

She was wrapped from the neck down in icy wet bed sheets, tightly bound like a mummy.

"After another lengthy stay in the sanitarium, she went on vacation to Colorado with her mother and daughter," says Vogel.

During the trip, she fell for her second and final husband, millionaire Texas oilman

Howard Lee. But she felt herself slipping into depression once again, and returned to the mental institution.

"Lee was deeply in love with Gene, and he visited her regularly," says Vogel. "When she was finally released in 1960, they married and settled down in Houston."

In 1962, Tierney filmed *Advise and Consent*, making one of the biggest comebacks of any star in history. She continued to accept a few acting jobs on the big and small screens, until her final role in the 1980 TV miniseries *Scrupes*.

Lee died in 1981, and 10 years later, Tierney died of emphysema, just two weeks shy of her 71st birthday.

*Gene Tierney: A Biography* can be bought in bookstores and online, and on Michelle Vogel's Web site, [www.michellevogel.com](http://www.michellevogel.com).

- **ROBIN MIZRAHI**  
April 4, 2005 / GLOBE 21

with Columbia Pictures and accepted it. Her father set up a company to manage her income, but several years later, she discovered he had stolen all her money to pay off his business debts.

In 1941, at 21 years old, the big-screen beauty married fashion designer Oleg Cassini. Two years later, she became pregnant while filming *Heaven Can Wait*. But tragedy loomed. When she went to sign autographs and entertain the on-leave GIs at the Hollywood Canteen, the actress caught German measles.

"Her daughter Daria was born premature at

two and a half pounds, and blind and deaf," says Vogel. "Doctors said she would never progress mentally beyond the age of 18 months."

Tierney was devastated and reluctantly agreed to put Daria in a home so she could get the care she required. Soon after, Tierney and Cassini separated.

The screen siren went on to date John F. Kennedy, Prince Aly Kahn (Rita Hayworth's ex-husband), as well as billionaire tycoon Howard Hughes. But she and Cassini stayed close and with time they reconciled. Their