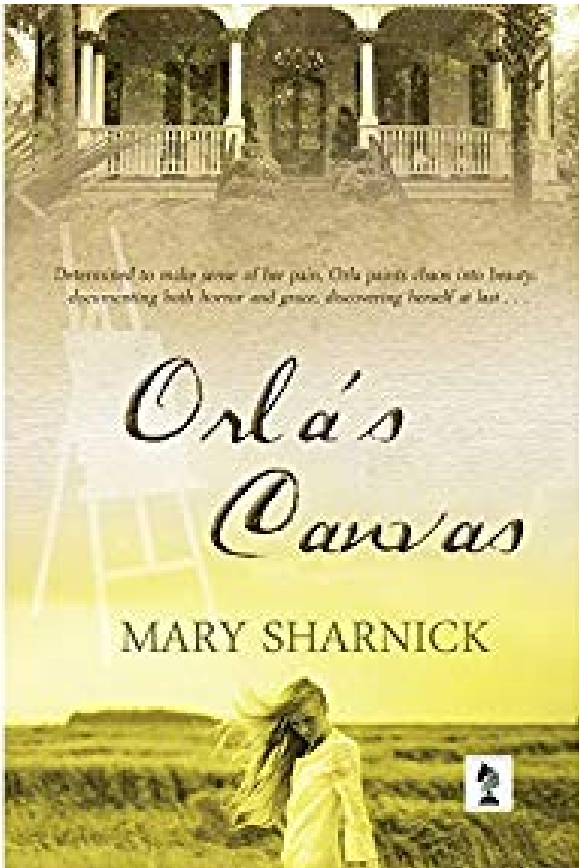


Orla's Canvas



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Author:	Mary Sharnick
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[Orla's Canvas.epub](#)

Narrated by eleven-year-old Orla Gwen Gleason, *Orla's Canvas* opens on Easter Sunday, in St. Suplice, Louisiana, a “misspelled town” north of New Orleans, and traces Orla's dawning realization that all is not as it seems in her personal life or in the life of her community. The death of St. Suplice's doyenne, Mrs. Bellefleur Dubois Castleberry, for whom Orla's mother keeps house, reveals Orla's true paternity, shatters her trust in her beloved mother, and exposes her to the harsh realities of class and race in the Civil Rights-era South. When the Klan learns of Mrs. Castleberry's collaboration with the local Negro minister and Archbishop Rummel to integrate the parochial school, violence fractures St. Suplice's vulnerable stability. The brutality Orla witnesses at summer's end awakens her to life's tenuous fragility. Like the South in which she lives, she suffers the turbulence of changing times. Smart, resilient, and fiercely determined to make sense of her pain, Orla paints chaos into beauty, documenting both horror and grace, discovering herself at last through her art.