



# Thing of Beauty

*Stephen Fried*

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At age seventeen, Gia Carangi was working the counter at her father's Philadelphia luncheonette, Hoagie City. Within a year, Gia was one of the top models of the late 1970's, gracing the covers of *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, partying at New York's Studio 54 and the Mudd Club, and redefining the industry's standard of beauty. She was the darling of moguls and movie stars, royalty and rockers. Gia was also a girl in pain, desperate for her mother's approval—and a drug addict on a tragic slide toward oblivion, who started going directly from \$10,000-a-day fashion shoots to the heroin shooting galleries on New York's Lower East Side. Finally blackballed from modeling, Gia entered a vastly different world on the streets of New York and Atlantic City, and later in a rehab clinic. At twenty-six, she became one of the first women in America to die of AIDS, a hospital welfare case visited only by rehab friends and what remained of her family. Drawing on hundreds of interviews with Gia's family, lovers, friends, and colleagues, *Thing of Beauty* creates a poignant portrait of an unforgettable character—and a powerful narrative about beauty and sexuality, fame and objectification, mothers and daughters, love and death.

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