

# Tomorrow is Forever

by GWEN BRISTOW

THE STORY THUS FAR: Spratt Herlong, motion picture producer, met and married Elizabeth, whose first husband, Arthur Kittredge, was reported killed in World War I, but who later, unrecognized, went to work for Spratt under the name of Kessler. Dick Herlong enlisted in the Marines to do his part in finishing the mess for all time. Elizabeth finally recognized Kessler. She told him that she knew him to be her former husband. He denied the fact, spent considerable time in explaining that she was living in the past—that she should forget the dreams of her youth and live only for her husband and children. He said unless she could believe him, he must go away.

## CHAPTER XXII

In looking for that dream of security, you have been looking for Arthur." He added, firmly and incisively, "If I were your first husband, Mrs. Herlong, I would tell you exactly what I am telling you now. You don't want him back."

Elizabeth passed her hand over her forehead, pushing back her hair. The gesture seemed to clear her eyes and her mind with them. She said, "You are not Arthur, then?"

"No. Your first husband is dead. You can't have him back, and I repeat, you don't want him back."

He paused to be sure she was listening. She nodded to assure him that she was.

Elizabeth thought of the time when Cherry, as a baby, had been so ill they had feared they might lose her. She remembered when Spratt had lost his job, hit from behind by a friend he had trusted. She thought of the night when she had sobbed secretly on his shoulder at Dick's joining the Marines, and he had said, "What do you suppose I'm here for?"

"Yes!" she exclaimed. Oh yes. "I can be a friend of you both," said Kessler, "a dear friend perhaps, but I'm outside your essential life because I did not help you build it. Don't let me threaten it now, Mrs. Herlong! You can keep it—that depends on your self-command, not on mine. No human being can destroy the structure of a marriage except the two who made it. It is the one human edifice that is impregnable except from within. Keep it. You need it."

Elizabeth smiled, without realizing that she was doing so. "Yes," she said to him, "I need it." Elizabeth had a sense of freedom like nothing she had ever felt before. She drew a long breath. Her mind flashed back to that bright year with Arthur, and then lingered on her twenty years with Spratt. The two periods were as different in meaning as they were in length. She had known all along that the second had a value greater than the first. But she had never placed them side by side, as Kessler had made her do today, to see with vehement clarity how her love for Spratt overpowered anything she had ever shared with Arthur.

"Thank you, Mr. Kessler," she said in a low voice. "You don't know what you've done for me."

But she remembered that there was something else she could do for him. He had told her so last night. She roused herself to speak.

She said, "Mr. Kessler, last night you suggested you had a favor to ask of me. I hope that's still true."

Kessler looked up, with a slight start as though her voice had recalled him from a great distance. For a moment he seemed to be getting his thoughts in order. Then he answered, "Yes, it's still true."

"I told you last night," said Elizabeth, "I'd be happy to do anything in my power for you. After what you have done for me today, I'd like to repeat that in capitals."

Kessler smiled at her. She had been right; he did believe that she was fully persuaded, and that was what he wanted. "Thank you, Mrs. Herlong. I want to put, shall we say, a part of tomorrow in your hands, Margaret."

She was astonished. "You mean you want me to take her?"

He nodded. "But don't you want her? I thought you loved her so much."

"I do love her. But I shan't be here always."

Elizabeth sat up straight, holding the arms of her chair. "What do you mean?"

"Look at me, Mrs. Herlong," he said quietly. "Haven't you ever wondered how I have lived as long as this?"

"No, I haven't. Your life has hardly seemed to depend on physical strength—Mr. Kessler, forgive us! What a strain we have put on you! Dick, myself, all of us—we never stopped to realize you were ill."

"That doesn't matter," he answered, so quickly that it was like an interruption. "Please don't think it matters. If you let this trouble you I'll be sorry I spoke. Please!" he exclaimed insistently, for she had risen to her feet, ready to go before he wore himself out with any more talking.

Elizabeth sat down again. "Mr. Kessler, of course I'll take Margaret. I'll take her now if you'll let me. But don't you want to come with her? Why don't you let me take care of you, instead of staying here with nobody but a hired

housekeeper? If you only knew how much I should like to do it!"

"No, no, that's not what I want. Thank you, but I only wanted to tell you that it's very unlikely I'll live as long as Margaret will need protection. When I can no longer be her father, will you be her mother?"

"Of course I will. No, please don't start to thank me. Spratt and I both love children; now that ours are growing up we've often said we wished we had another younger than Brian. So don't start being grateful."

"You may get a great reward for it," said Kessler. "I told you how brilliant her parents were."

"Oh, that. I hope she's all you think her, but if she isn't, it makes no difference. She's a dear child. With all my heart I hope she won't need us, but if she does, we'll be very happy to have her. Don't fear for Margaret's future." She spoke quickly and sincerely.

"I won't," he promised her smiling. "Not for hers, nor for yours."

"Thank you. Now I'm going. You are very tired."

Kessler, who had risen when she did, had sat down as though too tired to keep standing. He had sat holding his cane rigidly, looking at it instead of at her while she talked. But he had listened, with a faint smile of gratitude, as though what she was saying brought him a great sense of peace. Now, still without looking up, he said, very low,

"Thank you, Mrs. Herlong. I hope you will never be so lonely that what anyone will say to you can mean

"Poor kid, of course we'll take her."

as much as that means to me." He was silent a moment. Then, "Good-by," he said.

"Good-by," said Elizabeth. She went over to him. He was still looking down. She bent and kissed his forehead quickly. Before he could say anything else she went out.

Kessler leaned his arm on the table by him and bent his head to rest on it. She was gone and she seemed to have taken all his strength with her. He thought of Elizabeth, leaving him for years of vigorous living. He was so tired that he could hardly imagine what it was like to be vigorous.

But he had given her those years to come. She had told him so, not dreaming how much her words meant to him. He was convinced now that she did not know who he was. But he knew, and that was enough. When she told him what Arthur had done for her, it was as though she was telling him that at last he had finished what he had set out to do that day in the German hospital. He thought of what he had said to Jacoby that day. "You never loved a woman enough to die for her." It had been hard enough to die for her once. But in retrospect that seemed almost easy compared to what it had cost him today to kill his image in her soul.

When Spratt came home that evening she only told him Kessler was ill and had asked if they would take care of Margaret. Spratt agreed without hesitation.

"Poor kid, of course we'll take her. You won't mind if she's a bit of trouble?"

"Of course not," said Elizabeth. She nearly added, "Even if she were, I'd do anything on earth for him," but checked herself. That would require explaining, and she did not yet feel ready to explain. Spratt was talking.

"Look here, Elizabeth, maybe that guy is too sick to work and is just keeping it up because he can't afford to stop. Do you suppose we could persuade him to take a rest?"

"Oh Spratt, please try! Make him let us pay for it. And please—"

"Yes, what?"

"Tell him it was your idea. I don't think he'd take it from me."

"What an intense sort of person you are," Spratt observed with a grin. "You feel things all the way through. All right, I'll give him a ring in the morning. Rather late for it tonight."

The next morning she was up, having coffee, when Spratt came into her room.

"Thought I'd call Kessler now," he said. "If he feels like seeing me I can go by on the way to the studio." He gave her a sidelong glance. "Now that you've slept on it, do you still feel like having Margaret here?"

"Yes, if you do."

"It's all right with me."

"You're a prince, Spratt."

He chuckled. "Not me. You're the one who'll have to bother about her clothes and lessons and teeth and disposition. It won't be as easy as looking out for your own children, either."

"Who said they were ever easy?"

"Your mind's made up, then?"

She nodded.

"Okay," said Spratt. He sat down on her chaise-longue and picked up the phone.

"This is Spratt Herlong. Can I speak to Mr. Kessler? . . . What? . . . Yes . . . Yes . . . I understand, . . . I'll be right over."

He set down the phone, and turned to Elizabeth, who had been listening in alarm. "What is it, Spratt?" she asked.

Spratt wet his lips, and shook his head slowly, as though trying to get used to what it was he had just heard. He answered,

"Kessler died this morning at six o'clock."

For a moment he and Elizabeth sat staring at each other. They were speechless with the curious shocked feeling of trying to get their minds adjusted to a sudden announcement of death. Spratt spoke first, saying something about having to call the studio. For a moment he was silent again, then he stood up.

"This is strange," he said slowly. "Like being hit on the head. He never said anything about being that sick. I'd better get over there right away."

"Yes, go right over," said Elizabeth. She felt as if there was a great deal more she should be saying. But she could not get it out now. She asked, "Why didn't he tell us, Spratt?"

"Maybe he didn't know."

"I think he did," said Elizabeth. Spratt went over to the door and opened it. "I guess we were about his best friends, too," he said guiltily as he went out.

There was nothing more she could do now. Nothing but sit there, staring at the curtains.

But she suddenly remembered that this was not true. There was still something she could do, something she must do at once. She must get Margaret.

Elizabeth sprang up. At the idea of Margaret, alone again in her desolate little world, she found that she was not quite as numb as she had thought. She had to get Margaret now, before the child began to feel utterly abandoned. She began to hurry into her clothes.

When she reached Kessler's apartment she found that Spratt had been there and gone, to attend to the last arrangements somebody had to attend to. The housekeeper was very busy, answering the telephone and carrying out the various instructions Spratt had given her. Margaret was curled up in a big chair in the corner where the tree had stood last Christmas. She had put on her clothes in a haphazard fashion very different from her usual neatness—yesterday's crumpled dress, one shoelace untied, the parting between her pigtailed carelessly awry. When Elizabeth approached her Margaret looked up, showing a streaky little face worn out with her having cried too much.

Elizabeth did not say anything. She sat down in the big chair, for Margaret did not take up much room and there was space for her at the edge of the seat. She put her arms around Margaret and drew the untidy little head to rest against her. For a moment Margaret clung to her without speaking, then she gave another choking little sob.

"He died," she said brokenly. "Everybody that belongs to me dies."

Elizabeth felt like sobbing too. She was not used to hating anybody. But with Margaret in her arms she felt that if all the words of hate in every language could be rolled into one they could not express how much she hated fascists and what they accomplished.

"Not everybody, Margaret," she said gently. "We belong to you too."

Margaret looked up at her again. She shook her head slowly.

"No, you don't belong to me."

"Don't you want us to belong to you?"

Margaret was puzzled. "You?" she asked. "You and who else?"

"My husband, and all our family. We want you to belong to us. And we won't leave you. You'll stay with us always."

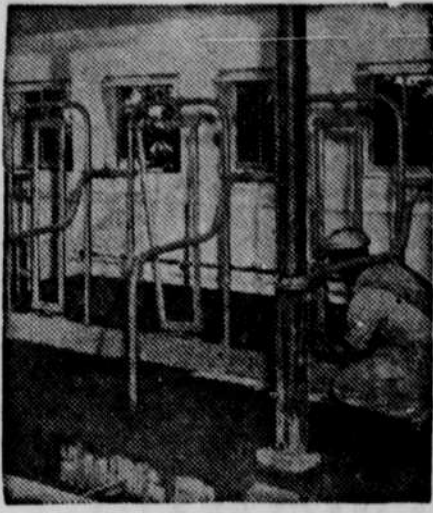
(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Farm Topics

### Protecting a Milk Herd Against Fire

#### Midwestern Dairyman Builds Improved Barn

Fireproof "vault" or barn is the latest development in farm construction and remodeling. Pioneer-



Interior construction of fireproof "vault" on Clarkson farm at Haska, Ill.

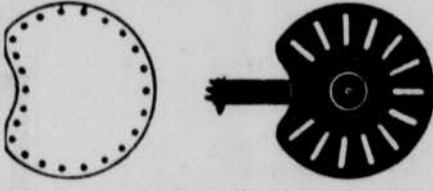
ing the way is Alick Clarkson of Haska, Ill.

His 45 by 36 foot dairy barn has a noncombustible floor and is of such sanitary construction that quality milk can be produced with little effort. The ground floor is protected from fire by a mow floor of three-ply, 1 1/2 inches thick, laminated gypsum board and a gypsum wall-board ceiling.

The studs are covered on the outside with noncombustible gypsum sheathing and fireproof composition shingles, and on the inside with fireproof wallboard.

Clarkson's use of laminated gypsum board for flooring is something new in barn construction. The purpose of the construction is to assure him that a fire would not quickly spread to the cattle quarters, and that ample time would be given to remove the cows to safety.

### Easier Riding Seat



Leather or Canvas Covering for Seat of Riding Implement.

An easy riding seat for any implement can be made more comfortable by cutting a piece of leather or heavy canvas as shown in the illustration. Sew or lace this to the seat around the outer edge.

### Agriculture In the News W. J. DRYDEN

#### Tomatoes of 1946

Tomatoes, already rating high in vitamin content, being second only to oranges in vitamin C, will be "enriched" with vitamin A, following work at University of Chicago.

Tomato cannery wastes will be put to use. Oil being extracted from the seeds, cannery waste will provide an extracted ether soluble fraction of 12.4 per cent.

By treating plants with the fumes of a growth-promoting acid, naphthoxyacetic, seedless tomatoes may be produced.

The skins of tomatoes are being used for the valuable resin they contain. An improved method of dehydrating tomatoes promises to make them of commercial importance.

#### Creep-Fed Pigs Grow Bigger in Less Time

When pigs on rye pasture were creep-fed, 5.6 per cent more of the pigs survived to weaning age than when they were forced to eat with the sows, experiments at the University of Illinois reveal.

The average daily gains of the pigs are greater under the creep-feeding method. The difference noted of .06 pound per pig a day is of doubtful significance, but the total gain for 100 pigs would amount to 6 pounds in favor of those fed in the creep. If fed for 40 days, the 100 creep-fed pigs would show a difference of 240 pounds more pork up to weaning time.

#### Farm Fire Losses

Fire extinguishers are again available for the farmer. Where fires in wood, paper, cloth or hay break out, suitable types of extinguishers are the pump tank, soda acid, foam, gas cartridge, or loaded stream types.

Soda acid and foam extinguishers must be kept where they will not be exposed to freezing temperatures, or else be housed in suitably heated cabinets, and they require annual recharging.

### Gay Hostess Aprons Of One Yard or Less



A GAY apron adds glamour to your role as hostess. These aprons take little material. Colorful embroidery that a youngster would love to do.

You can make these aprons from one pattern. Pattern 964 has transfer pattern of an 8 1/4 by 11 1/2 and two 3 1/2 by 5-inch motifs; directions.

Due to an unusually large demand and current conditions, slightly more time is required in filling orders for a few of the most popular pattern numbers.

Send your order to:  
Sewing Circle Needlecraft Dept.  
564 W. Randolph St. Chicago 60, Ill.  
Enclose 16 cents for Pattern

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_



### Look! Muffins made with Peanut Butter!

(No shortening and only 1/4 cup sugar)

If you'd like to try something brand new in muffins that's truly delicious and saves on shortening, too—try Kellogg's new Peanut Butter Muffins. You'll love their flavor. You'll love, too, the tender, melt-in-your-mouth texture of bran muffins made with Kellogg's ALL-BRAN. For ALL-BRAN is milled extra-fine for golden softness.

1/2 cup peanut butter  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 egg, well beaten  
1 cup milk  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup Kellogg's ALL-BRAN  
1 cup sifted flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder

Blend peanut butter and sugar thoroughly; stir in egg, milk and KELLLOGG'S ALL-BRAN. Let soak until most of moisture is taken up. Sift flour with baking powder and salt; add to first mixture and stir only until flour disappears. Fill greased muffin pans two-thirds full and bake in moderately hot oven (400°F.) about 20 minutes. Makes 10 tender, tasty muffins.

### Good Nutrition, too!

ALL-BRAN is made from the VITAL OUTER LAYERS of finest wheat—contains a concentration of the protective food elements found in the whole grain. One-half cup provides over 1/2 your daily minimum need for iron. Serve Kellogg's ALL-BRAN daily!

# ANGRY

Please don't be angry at us if you can't always get Smith Bros. Cough Drops. Our output is still restricted. Soon, we hope, there'll again be plenty of Smith Brothers... soothing, delicious. Black or Menthol, 5¢.

SMITH BROS. COUGH DROPS  
BLACK OR MENTHOL—5¢

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No matter what you're baking, it will taste better if you use Gooch's Best All-Purpose Enriched Flour. For this flour brings out the full flavor of the ingredients. See for yourself if you don't think Gooch's Best is the best flour you ever used.

GOOCH MILLING & ELEVATOR CO., Lincoln, Neb.

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IF YOU BAKE AT HOME—easy to use, extra-fast Fleischmann's Fast Rising Dry Yeast gives you bread with the old-fashioned home-baked flavor your men-folks love—in a few hours! And you can bake any time—no being "caught short" without yeast in the house—no worry about spoiling dough with weak yeast. Fast Rising Fleischmann's stays full strength for weeks on your pantry shelf—as potent... as fast-acting as the day you bought it.

Get Fast Rising Fleischmann's from your grocer. Always keep a supply handy!