long, motion picture producer, met and married Elizabeth, whose first husband, Arthur Kittredge, was reported killed in World War I, but who later appeared in Hollywood and secured a job from Spratt. Under the name of Kessler, and with his disfigurements, he was not recognized. He was a frequent visitor at the Herlong home and they all became good friends. One day while they were waiting for Spratt, Arthur told Elizabeth that he realized the fight she was going through, knowing that Dick would soon be going away to war. She said that so far she could only see the war in terms of her son, not as a noble struggle for a better world.

CHAPTER XVII

"I wish there were something I could say to you," he told her in a low voice.

Elizabeth had clasped her hands and was moving them against each other restlessly. "I don't know why I feel so much like talking to you. Maybe it's just that if I don't talk it out pretty soon I don't know what will become of me. Do you mind listening?"

"I want to," he answered, with such simple sincerity that she could have no doubt of his sympathy. He hesitated an instant, then asked,

"Can we sit down, Mrs. Herlong?" "How stupid of me!" she exclaimed. She hurried to lead the way to two deck chairs placed on the lawn, at the side of the house. Cherry had left a sweater on one of them, and Elizabeth put it on, for the evening chill was blowing in from the sea. "We aren't just courteous about not noticing your limitations, Mr. Kessler," she remarked as they sat down, "we're usually not even aware of them."

When he answered it was in a matter-of-fact voice. "This is one of the things I found hardest to get used to," he said. "I mean, asking ! for a chair. I had always been so healthy that I was the one who had to be reminded not to expect too much of other people. Please don't be embarrassed-I'm not."

"Are you cold?" asked Elizabeth. "No. What was it you wanted to tell me?"

"Spratt is my second husbandyou didn't know that, did you? It's not important in any personal sense between us, it never has been important and it wouldn't be now except that my first husband was killed in the last war. I loved him very much. Of course, now, looking back on it, it's easy to say it shouldn't | you. have mattered so much, I was a young girl with all my life before me, and as it happened I met Spratt and everything turned out as you've seen it. But at the time there was no way for me to look forward. When I remember it-" She stopped.

After a moment Kessler asked, "Did you suffer so horribly?" "I can't tell you what it was. It

wasn't anything anybody could understand except somebody who had been through it. I had loved him so, and then all of a sudden he was dead. It was-anyway, I never went through anything like it before, and I never have again. Of course, it's very often, but now-" She stopped

There was a silence that seemed to last a long time. At last Kessler said, in a voice so low she barely heard him, "Yes? But now?"

"Don't you understand? I can't take it again. I can't. I thought like that. It was over and done with. My world had been shot to and made myself go on living, and I was rewarded more than I ever pieces again, it stays that way. I why should I be expected to? Life and they're going to need you more. can't be all beginnings and no fulfillment!'

As she broke off Kessler asked, "What is that exquisite scent that's suddenly here all around us?" "Night-blooming jasmine. Some-

times it blooms till late in the year. Are you listening to me?"

"If I hadn't been listening I shouldn't have asked about the flowers. I was just thinking, in a world why should anyone have to say what you are saying to me?"

"You're not answering me, are you?" she said. "There isn't any answer. But thank you for fistening." After a moment she went on. "I can't tell you what a relief it has been to say all this. I believe saying it to you has got it out of me so I won't pour it all out to Spratt. That's why I'm grateful." She reached her hand out and laid it over his, as it rested on the head of his cane. To her astonishment, she found that instead of lying there lightly as she had thought, his hand was gripping the cane with such violence that the muscles were hard and the knuckles were like rocks. Elizabeth drew away quickly and sat up. "Mr. Kessler! What have

I done to you?" "Nothing," he answered sharply, and sat up too, as though startled. "What is the trouble?"

"Why couldn't I keep quiet?" she demanded of herself contritely.

THE STORY THUS FAR: Spratt Her- | child who thinks nobody has any- | Kessler, why doesn't he ever say thing to do but listen-"

"But I wanted to listen!" Kessler exclaimed. "You're not sorry you talked to me!"

"Not for myself, oh no. But I was so absorbed in myself I didn't realize how I might be affecting to be told. Because we have failed you. Have I brought back some- him terribly." thing that's better forgotten? Forgive me, please forgive me, if I've tried you too far."

Kessler stood up abruptly. He turned and moved a step so as to have." face her. She looked up at him standing between her and the stars, a black figure that gave an impression of strength in spite of the crippled body.

"I told you not to try to answer me. Please don't try. There's no answer, for me or for you."

"Yes there is," he exclaimed decisively. "For a moment, sitting there, you had me almost believing



"There's no answer, for me or for

that there wasn't. You said it was too late for you to start over. You are not required to start over. But you are required to keep going. Remember, your responsibilities are of your own creation. You aren't responsible for what's happening in the world, but you are responsible

for how you take it." "I told you I couldn't take it. I can feel myself breaking at the prospect. I can't take it."

"Yes you can," he said sternly, "and you're going to."

His force was like a stimulus. Elizabeth exclaimed, "Do you beall over-I don't even think of it lieve I can. Mr. Kessler? You seem to know me pretty well by

now-do you believe I can?" "You can," he returned earnestly, "because you've promised it, by every action of your life. Nobody required you to get married, or to have children, or to live so that you would be essential to their well bethere never would be anything else ing. If you had wanted to, you might have been one of these whining creatures who takes to her bed pieces, and I picked up the pieces at every annoyance and becomes the came in to tell Margaret her supper center of her little universe by demanding attentions she's too useless dreamed of expecting. But I can't to get any other way. But you the broken glass before her. do that another time. Even if I had | didn't do that. You outlived your the strength, it's too late. I was own early grief. To do it you had twenty when I lost Arthur. It wasn't to strip your character down to its easy to go on then. But now I'm core of strength, so that this is what forty-four. If my world is shot to they have seen of you, this is what Dick." you have taught them to expect. can't go back and start over. And They believe in you. They need you, Don't fail them."

> chest felt tight. After awhile Kess- reached across the broken glass. ler resumed his chair. He turned to her, saying,

fail.'

that? Already?"

"Why don't you stop looking at so full of possibilities for pleasure, this entirely from your own viewpoint?" he asked. "You wonder if she nodded. "Right, thank you. you can take it—has it never oc- I'm always scared of falling down very well?"

very much about it." "He doesn't seem so to you, maybe. But he is thinking about it." "How do you know?" She was bad cut. How did that happen?" startled. "Has he said anything to

you?" "No. But I know he is, because I've been there." Elizabeth exclaimed, "Yes you

have. Tell me what it's like!" "It's a torment of bewilderment," he returned. "You don't say much about it because everybody seems to understand it better than you do. You don't know the reason other people aren't explaining it to you is that | had given them. they don't understand it either. You go around wondering how you're

Elizabeth was sitting forward, her hands tight on the arms of her chair. "That's what's going on in his mind! | my mother." "Here I've been babbling like a But why hasn't he told us? Mr.

going to act like a brave hero.

"I suspect it's because he knows what's going on in your mind, a lot better than you think.' "You mean," she said bitterly,

"he knows his father and I aren't fit "Would you believe me if I told you I loved your son, Mrs. Herlong?

I do love him. He's so much like the son I used to think I might "You never had any children, did you? Margaret told me this after-

noon you adopted her after her par-

ents died." "No, I never had any children," he returned steadily. "That was another of the things the war made

impossible." "Oh," she said faintly. After a moment she exclaimed, "Yet you have conquered, Mr. Kessler. You have gone on living, living well and nobly, in a world that left you absolutely nothing to live for. How did you do it? It seems strange that I who have everything should turn to you who have nothing, and say 'Please help me.' But I do. Because right now it seems that it is you who have everything and I who have nothing. Will you help me?" He asked, "Do you want me to try to tell Dick what he's being asked

to fight for?" "Yes! Can you? Will you?"

"I'll try. I'll do my best." "Thank you! You can do it better than I can. You've seen it. And you are so wise, so gentle, so-how

can I say it? I mean you're the only man I know I'd trust to do it well." There was a brief silence, then he said, "And you?"

"I'll take it, Mr. Kessler. Forgive

me for being such a coward." Margaret was going to have a Christmas party for some of her schoolmates, and Elizabeth suggested that she and the two older children come to Kessler's apartment one afternoon to decorate the Christmas tree. As it was hard to buy ornaments in the stores they brought their own, part of an abundance left over from earlier holidays. Margaret was there, jumping with excitement while Kessler looked on. He liked Christmas, and enjoyed her pleasure in it. While he was showing Elizabeth the silver fountain pen Spratt had given him as a Christmas present, Dick was dragging in a ladder, and calling to Elizabeth to move out of his way. "We'll start at the top," he said, setting up the ladder by the tree and beginning to "You hand me the junk, climb.

Cherry." With Elizabeth's assistance, Cherry handed up the junk. Margaret helped, her arms full of tinsel and her eyes wide and joyous. "It's just beautiful," she kept saying over and

over. "It's just beautiful." She got close against the resplendent tree and looked up through the branches. "I can see you up there, Dick! Look at me."

He bent down, scratching his face on the branches. "Sure, I see you. Hello." As he leaned over, a collection of glass balls slipped out of his hand and smashed on the floor at

"Oh!" Margaret cried in dismay. "It doesn't matter," Cherry reas-

sured her, "there are plenty more." "You've hung up about all it will hold, anyway," Kessler observed as the door opened and the housekeeper was ready. Margaret shrank back against the tree, looking down at

"I-I'm scared," she confessed. 'I might fall down and get cut." "Yes, so you might," Elizabeth "Come give her a lift, agreed.

"Okay. Wait a minute, Margaret." Dick scrambled down from the ladder. Remarking that he had jolted some lights out of place, Cher-

Elizabeth drew a long breath. Her ry climbed up to adjust them. Dick "Put your arms around my neck and hold tight so I can lift you, "Right now, you are beginning to | Margaret. There you are. She'll be along in a minute," he said to the She started. "Is it as obvious as housekeeper, and as she went out

he swung Margaret across the pile of glass and set her down. "Right?" he asked her. curred to you that Dick is taking it on broken things. I fell down once. and got a bad cut on my neck. See?"

"Dick? He doesn't seem to think She drew the collar of her dress Dick bent to look at the scar she showed him. "Why, you did get a

"A man kicked me," said Margaret, "and I fell down." "What?" said Dick.

The eyes of them all turned to her-Elizabeth, her hands full of tinsel. Cherry on the ladder adjusting the lights, Dick standing beside Margaret at the foot of the tree. Kessler, sitting in his chair near by, said nothing. But Margaret appeared not to realize the start she

"What man kicked you?" Dick demanded, and stopped, absorbing the idea of men who kicked little girls. Margaret answered without any excitement. "The man who killed

(TO BE CONTINUED)



THROWING THE BULL

crossed the ocean about those fabury of one who had spent a long evening with friends at the village inn. They showed him a quick way home across the fields, forgetting that the local bull was loose.

The bull attacked, not recognizing the Commando's red beret. The unfortunate animal was gripped by the horns and lugged about the field until it managed to break free and bolt.

"Pity I had those last two drinks," said the soldier-matador. "I ought to have got that chap off his bike."

Good Neighbor Policy

Jones looked over his garden fence and beckoned to his neighbor. "I say, Smith," he said confidentially, "I understand you have Brown's lawn mower." "Yeah, what of it?"

"Well, if you'll let me borrow it occasionally, I'll let you use his rake and shovel."

Sports Item Mother - You were supposed to come home from the ball game in an hour, and you stayed nearly two

Boy-It really wasn't my fault, mother. I tried to steal home in the fifth inning, and they wouldn't let that?

HE GOT PLENTY!



Mr.-While I was out with the boys last night, a burglar broke into our house.

Neighbor-Did he get anything? Mr.-I'll say he did. My wife watches that. thought it was me!

Something Missing

Rational Behavior

Mr.-Yes, he's gone on a meat

Long and Short of It

any description of the missing cash-

Hubbie-Yes, he was about 5 feet,

5 inches tall and about \$70,000 short.

Starting Even

who speaks six languages has just

married a girl who speaks three.

She-I see by the paper that a boy

He-I'd say that is about the right

Winter Winds

History Lesson

Golf Yarn

THANKSGIVING

Mr.-May I have the afternoon off

to go shopping with my wife?

Mr.-Thank you very much.

Extra Long

afternoon, but I couldn't stay for

Mrs.-They said it took place a

Double Trouble

Bess-I hear Jack's dad has two

Mrs.-I saw a swell show this

Boss-No; certainly not!

the last act.

month later.

mist?

Mr .- Why not?

wives to support.

Brother-I made a hole in one.

when Brutus stabbed him?

Brother-No, one sock.

Teacher-What did Caesar say

Wifie - Does the newspaper give

ances.

on a vacation?

nandicap.

weather!

versation.

Boy-Ouch!

Sis-One stroke?

Mother-Jimmie, you appear to bread shortage. have been at the jam again. Jimmie - Don't go by appear-Mack-Why not? Jack-I only eat toast. ances, mother.

Mother - No, I go by disappear-Old As You Want

Tommy-My granddad is 70 years

long enough. age that he closed his shop and went



John-What has done most to arouse the working classes? Mary-I give up.

John-The alarm clock.

Didn't You Know? Myron-This is certainly terrible terheads?

Dora-So you can find out the Byron-Yes, all it's fit for is conname of the man who signs the let-

> Parsonage Pun Stranger-I want your father to marry us and this is the girl who is

to be my wife. Preacher's Daughter - He'll be very glad to mate you, I'm sure.

taut. Double Dose

cousins. Cora-So what? Dora-That must be why I look so much alike.

> Wit-Probably because it's tide there. Mind Your Manners

Stranger-Little boy, would you like to show me the post office? Boy-I'd like to, sir, but my

Appropriate milkman's daughter? Hubbie-Rosie O-Grade-A.

Correct

Tess-You don't mean he's a biga-Nit-What is an octogenarian? Bess-No, but Jack just got maroctopuses.

DECEITFUL RASCAL

Angelo had been hired to work with a road gang high in the mountains and had been warned about rattlesnakes. He had been told, however, that a rattlesnake would always give a warning before strik-

One day as Angelo sat on a log eating his lunch, he noticed a large rattler a few feet away from him coiled and ready to strike. Depending on the information he had been given, he nonchalantly crossed his legs and waited for the signal. Just as he made this move, the rattler Among the stories which have struck, landing on the log just a quarter of an inch away from Anlous British Commandos is this sto- gelo's leg. For a second there was nothing but dust, and a few hundred feet away Angelo was heard to say: "Son of a gun, what's a da mat you no ringa da bell."

QUESTION OF AGE



Joan-I don't intend to be married until I'm 30 Jane-I don't intend to be 30 until

I'm married. Old, Old Story - Where were you last

Hubby-Well, in the first place . . Wifey-Yeah, I know all about the first place. Where were you after

Bright Side Joe-This is a funny war in one

Bill-What way? Joe-The Yanks are on one side and the jerks on the other.

Fair Enough Her-Do you love me? Him-Madly! Her-Would you die for me? Him-Well, er-no. Mine is an undying love.

One Thing Safe Agent-Do you want all your office furniture insured against theft? Manufacturer - Yes, everything except the clock. Everybody

Dough-nut Mack-There is going to be a Jack-That won't bother me any.

Jimmy - That's nothing. My Mrs.-Is it true that the butcher grandma will be a 170 if she lives got so fed up with the meat short-

DING-A-LING



Dumb-What is the purpose of let-

Knot So Good First Acrobat-How did you ever learn to walk a tight rope? Don't tell me you picked it up yourself!

Second Acrobat-No, it has to be

Dora-My father and mother are

Washed Away Nit-Why doesn't water leave the shore?

mother says it's impolite to point. Wifie-What's the name of the

Wit-A fellow who takes care of

Fattening Lambs

One help in putting weight on lambs is to keep sheep and lambs free from parasites, especially nodular worms and stomach worms. Infestation with parasites holds back growth and increases feed costs. Serious losses from parasites can be prevented by providing clean pasture, by the use of phenothiazine, and by taking other precautions.

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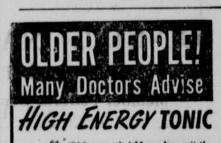
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