

SERIAL STORY

OF BRIGHTNESS GONE

BY HOLLY WATTERSON

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END OF LONELINESS

CHAPTER XXVI

CANDACE was shaking. In the chart room she gave Peter's name to the operator, listened while the loud-speaker in the corridor picked it up, "Dr. Frazier, Dr. Frazier." And then Peter's own voice on the phone, steady, reassuring.

"Peter," she said, careless of the given name, of possible listeners, "I don't know what I've done. She knows. Hurry."

"I'll be right there," he said quietly. "Call your relief, tell her to come on at once. You wait for me in the chart room."

She put in a call for the relief nurse, made a notation on 721's chart, "Hypo., 3:03," the last of Peter's orders for Faith she had carried out.

She went to the window, stood looking blindly into the courtyard. Down there at the bottom of the well made by the walls of the court was Emergency, where she and Peter had last worked. She had always been a good nurse, an efficient one, there was nothing with which to reproach herself on that score.

But if she hadn't let herself get so warped, so bitter, she might have been more human too, she might even have let herself get some fun out of those years. Might have had some patience, an occasional kindly word for the boys, overworked, overwrought, on the ambulance assignment who liked to slip in there occasionally for a word of cheer.

She thought of a proverb, read or heard somewhere, "Life is a mirror from which we see reflected back our own faces." Well, life had certainly shown her herself, reflected in Faith Hartshorne; with only this difference, that while it was Faith's body it was in her own case her mind that had been made sick. She realized now just how hard, wrapped up in her own bitterness as she was, how selfish she had been. Peter had done right to reproach her.

Peter... In her breast was a dull, heavy ache. Because he had loved her as a child, because he had understood, Peter had had patience with her for a long time. But even he had given out finally. It was true that he still looked her up for an occasional case; but that was only because he knew her to be a good nurse. Or at least, he had thought her a good nurse up until now.

Now she wondered if Peter would even think of her as a good nurse. What she had just done to Faith Hartshorne might not even give her claim to that title any longer.

Certainly, Faith was near death, and what she had just told her—that Martin had never loved her—was as severe a shock as could possibly have been given.

What if Faith died because of that shock? Even Peter could not forgive that, if it happened. Candace was sick with apprehension.

BEHIND her Peter said, "Get your wrap. You're going home."

She whirled, in swift alarm. "Is she—?"

"She's all right," Peter said. He looked grimly triumphant and she had an instant's suspicion that he had planned all this, that he had wished it so. "She's asked for toast and tea, after refusing food for days, she sent for her husband and I've just left on the beginning of a very touching reunion between them. She's going to be all right," he repeated. "It's you. You looked bushed."

She felt "bushed." She felt limp and nerveless, something without volition.

She followed him docilely to his car, sat quietly while he wrapped a rug about her legs. He didn't drive straight to her house, but out along the Parkway, on the road to the lake.

He was being kind to her. Probably he was grateful. Because, incredible as it would seem after what had happened, Mrs. Eustis would now get well; all her friends would say how wonderful Dr. Frazier was, how wonderful Dr. Frazier was, how wonderful Dr. Frazier was. He would have been grateful. Because, incredible as it would seem after what had happened, Mrs. Eustis would now get well; all her friends would say how wonderful Dr. Frazier was, how wonderful Dr. Frazier was, how wonderful Dr. Frazier was.

She needn't be, there was always Duffy. He hadn't missed out on a single chance, these past hectic days, to prove his devotion; and Mrs. Harper hadn't been angry after all, not permanently, that is; she had rather respected Candace for daring to cross her. She could still have Duffy if she wanted him. But she didn't want him any more, she didn't want

the life he offered with its drab, ugly compromises—

Peter said suddenly, "Great stuff, my gal. She told me everything. Stiff dose you handed out, but just what the doctor would have ordered."

HE sat staring straight ahead, and his hands gripped the wheel so hard that his knuckles showed white. "Tell me," he said, suppose the positions were reversed. Suppose you had had a dull, unexciting, but on the whole fairly decent young man in love with you for a long time—What I mean, Candace, is—could you take your own medicine, if the dose included me?"

Candace gasped. She said, stunned, stammering, "But—you're going to be married!"

"Sure," he said, trying to laugh, trying to make light of it. "To you—I hope."

"But—Dr. Patterson—you told him—"

He did laugh then. "I told him I was darn glad to get the Eustis case because then maybe I could get married. Sure, I told him that. But I didn't say who the girl was. Answer me quickly," he commanded. "I can't stand much more waiting—could you?"

Like a balloon that's been blown too full, the tension in Candace's head burst, her thought scattered into madly whirling pieces. But the pieces were bright, as in a kaleidoscope, and when the whirling stopped and they fitted into place they made pictures. There was Faith and her Harvey; there

was Duffy laughing with a coterie of dancing girls with fans of feathers, girls with doves, girls with or without various things; and there was—herself and Peter. All the ache, all the loneliness was suddenly gone.

THE END

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ACTOR COMPOSER

HORIZONTAL									
1 Pictured actor-composer, M.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 2000 pounds.	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Effervescence.	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Poem.	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41 Verbal.	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51 Monk.	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61 Paricle.	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71 Male sheep.	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81 River in Scotland.	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91 Perish.	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
101 Belongs to me.	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110
111 Kind of chaise.	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121 Child.	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130
131 Blue book (abbr.).	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140
141 Vegetable.	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151 Sprite.	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
161 Chinese sauce (abbr.).	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170
171 Alkaline solution.	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181 Doctor of Science (abbr.).	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190
191 One (Scott.).	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200
201 Within.	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
211 13,1416.	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220
221 Impartiality.	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230
231 Disregard.	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240

