

Lee Remick (Continued)



Whatever happens to Lee's career, hubby Bill Colleran and baby Kate come first.

flown long before. Lee had sought the key female role when Preminger first cast the production. While Otto wanted a big name at the time, he was sufficiently impressed to offer Lee a minor part. She haughtily refused it as "too small." Preminger was taken aback that any starlet would consider a role under his direction as small.

At Ishpeming, the next threat of a flareup came when Otto attempted to capitalize on Lee's statuesque figure and provocative appeal as publicity fodder. He told newsmen that although Rita Hayworth, Gina Lollobrigida, and many other breath-taking stars would have liked the role, it was given to Lee "because her sex appeal sold me."

Otto may have meant to be flattering, but he couldn't have picked a more touchy subject. Lee considers herself an actress, not a sex symbol. She's frequently complained that "boys have been pestering me since I was 16." Last year, Twentieth Century-Fox tried to label her "America's answer to Brigitte Bardot" and was left holding a handful of wrap-around towels without anybody to fill them.

Lee told Preminger what she had told Twentieth Century-Fox: "If my reputation is built on sex appeal, no one will take me seriously as an actress. I want a normal, respectable life for my husband and child. No cheesecake."

There was none, either. Just a little increased tension. Preminger held back with visible effort, and as the day's shooting closed, Lee sauntered over, smiling. "Otto," she said, "you were a good fellow today. You hardly yelled at anybody."

Preminger's assistants gulped. Their boss doesn't like to be treated in such cavalier fashion. Lee simply turned on her heel and walked away with a casualness that left him uncharacteristically speechless.

In effect, the two had tacitly made an armistice, and the following three months of work passed without incident, a triumph for Miss Remick and almost a new experience for Preminger. Toward the final days, he was even purring sweetly to his starlet, happy to find a talented youngster who could meet him on his own ground.

Those who have followed Lee Remick's career aren't surprised that she handled Preminger so skillfully. They

have learned that Lee, for all her physical attributes, is no starry-eyed empty-headed starlet but a professional, ready to take the hard work and ups and downs of a professional but demanding

the respect due a professional, too. Certainly her success with Preminger partly resulted from giving him the same kind of respect she herself demanded. She never forgot that while

Otto has had his flops, he is also the man who made "Carmen Jones," "Laura," and "Porgy and Bess." And while his reputation is frightening, she knew he has brought many

actresses to peak performances. Kim Novak, for example, allegedly bursts into tears at the sight of him, but she did her best work in his "Man with the Golden Arm."

Lee's matter-of-fact professionalism is hard won. Daughter of a well-to-do department store owner in Quincy, Mass., she was educated in private schools and originally hoped to become

a ballerina. At 16 she was dancing in a stock company on Cape Cod when an actress with a minor role fell ill. Lee stepped in and was promptly bitten by the acting bug.

Unlike many youngsters, Lee with her natural talent had luck in getting the jobs necessary for experience. She toured with Rudy Vallee, Art Carney, and Jackie Cooper. She appeared in musicals in Chicago and Dallas, and at 17 was signed for a Broadway play.

"Be Your Age" folded after three days, and her next Broadway venture never even made it from the out-of-town tryouts. Lee's toughness was severely tried during these failures but pulled her through.

WITH HER MOTHER, who took up radio acting during World War II, Lee settled in New York and attended classes at Barnard College because it was close to the TV studios. She also made a concession to showmanship by occupying Marilyn Monroe's former apartment. With typical Remick humor, she explained to visitors: "You know the girl. She married Arthur Miller."

In a short time, Lee had won so many TV roles she had to give up the idea of winning a degree, too. It was a television appearance that prompted Elia Kazan to cast her as the 15-year-old drum majorette in "A Face in the Crowd." Lee learned a lot about acting from Kazan and, possibly, how to get along with a demanding director.

Next followed a not-too-successful portrayal of a Southern belle in "Long Hot Summer" and a role in "These Thousand Hills," which Lee doesn't care to speak about.

In private life, Lee has been the wife of TV director Bill Colleran for two years. Their daughter, Kate, was born last January. The couple's marriage credo is: "Be normal." This evidently means living within a budget, something foreign to both. The last triumph I heard about was that they'd saved 60 cents on candles for a dinner party which must have cost them at least \$100. And they were blithely ignoring the \$1,100 couches they "picked up" for their New York apartment!

Colleran is a husband justly proud of his wife's magnetism and proportions but, like most husbands, he doesn't consider them national institutions. When they were married, Bill became violently angry at newsmen who printed her measurements as part of the wedding announcement.

His concern on this subject may be short-lived unless Lee controls her appetite for sweets. In the three days I was interviewing her, she consumed nearly two pounds and admits having to hide candy from her husband, who's afraid she'll balloon nature's generous gifts. On a trip to Europe, for example, she sneaked into the bathroom at night to gulp down sweets while her husband was sleeping. The rattle of a candy-bar wrapper eventually woke him and put Lee back on the noncaloric wagon.

So far, however, Lee still shapes up well, as audiences will see in "Anatomy of a Murder." Nobody doubts they'll like Lee Remick as a woman. But as an actress? Well, when moviegoers answer that, Otto Preminger will know whether his \$3-million gamble was really worth his Machiavellian maneuverings and painful self-restraint.



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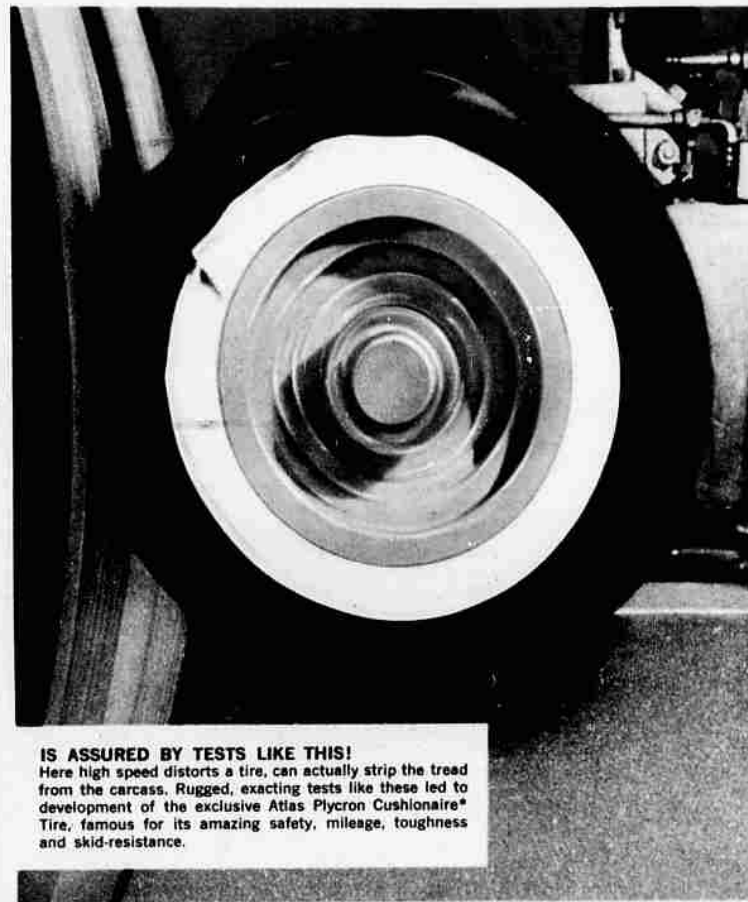
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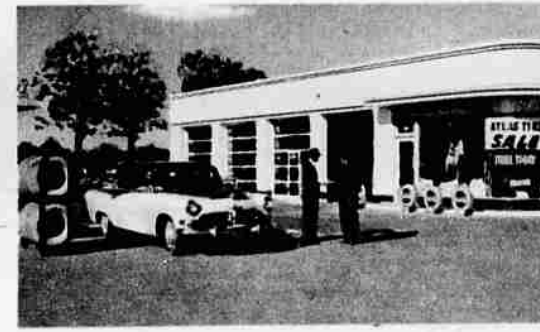
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