

Elizabeth Strout : Olive Kitteridge, pages 1 - 34 to talk about on June 20th at Kate's Glossary in normal type (tho the German is in italics)

and some comments in italics, too. You can ignore them.

Pharmacy - until I met an American who became my friend I was not used to this word.

5 In UK we say 'the chemist's'. You get your medicine at the chemist's (shop)

p.1

bramble - it usually refers to the bushes that grow wild and don't have so much in the way of berries - *Brombeere*

10 *Thinking back to the time when you worked for money. What time of day was your favourite? (Henry remembers his mornings fondly.) Do you remember any work rituals fondly? Later, while reading, notice when beauty recurs!*

p. 2

steadfast - unchangeable, faithful

What kind of marriage is this?

15 *(sea image, Henry's character, 'cheerful')*

'Inwardly' - we get some inside knowledge

to rectify - to put right

(cold breeze)

p. 3

20 bear down - go quickly to somebody in a dominating way

chore - task

(more about Olive and her mothering)

brisk - quick, lively but probably 'no nonsense' and brief

(more about Henry)

25 *Enter Denise, the focus of the story. Keep watching how we as readers find out who likes whom and why.*

How do you react if somebody (young) has bad deportment? (Haltung)

sturdy - strong, not thin

p. 4

30 let it drop

fast and furious

the odd man out (the one that doesn't fit)

tuck - you tuck a child into bed; tuck also = *Bundfalte*

diffident - uncertain. *(When we were talking about Germany's image of itself,*

35 *historically and were using the word 'shy' I wondered if 'diffident' might be right. But I don't think so.)*

outskirts - *Vorstädte* but a much more beautiful word

trailer - *Wohnwagen*

p. 5

40 sprout - when a young plant bursts up through the soil

(Eating baked beans with visitors?! Do remember Christa D saying the kids loved coming to her house because they got fish fingers?)

p. 6

pole beans - beans that have grown on poles? So runner beans - *Stangenbohnen?*

45 *I think the meal together - young couple, not so young couple but employers and their teenager bears comparing with one's own experience - any stories?*

linger - take time

- p. 7
 Why do you think we get so much detail about Denise all from Henry's point of view?
- 50 How much of it is true?
- p. 8
 splotches - marks of water/moisture
 lactate = when the milk of a nursing mother spills
 Do you have a picture of Jerry sitting eating?
- 55 pp. 8 - 9 Olive refuses to go to church. Why are we told?
- p. 9 tar = Teer; suffocate - ersticken (Not, I think, the result of too many cigarettes)
- p. 10
 'Sweetness of a time that contained no thoughts of a beginning and no thoughts of an end'...'small pleasures...to the brim' (brim = Krempe, Rand, Trinkrand) (Often before
 60 somebody cries their tears brim in their eyes.... Only then is it used as a verb.)
 mittens - gloves without fingers, all in one piece
 assume - take on, become
- p. 11
 Henry thinks this is the 'stuff of America'.
- 65 There is a (right wing) movement in US at the moment where some women say they
 want to be housewives/homemakers (the US word) : tradwife.
 Interesting that he feels he can think differently about her role in life as she is not his
 daughter.
- p. 12
- 70 Olive can be monosyllabic, too.
 slip - (aus)rutschen. Here it means they go down. (Don't forget - 'slip' = Unterrock,
 Unterhose = pants, panties, knickers)
- p. 13
 plain - schlicht
- 75 agreeable - sympathisch
 simpleton - Einfaltspinsel, may be.
 majored - studied as a main subject
 conversant - knows about
 attach o.s. - u.a. anheften
- 80 p. 14 'Goodwill toward men' - the angels sing this at Christmas (first in the fields:-)
 p. 15 Denise and Jerry - objective narrative?
 Time has passed - how much? How do we as readers gauge it? NB present tense
- p. 16 paucity - the noun from poor - the low number of people there.
- p. 17
- 85 spatula - Pfannenheber, -wender
 'You get used to things without getting used to things' ?
 bewilderment - confusion
 cuff - where you put your hand into it
- p. 18
- 90 to sign a card with 'love' is customary among friends but Denise is very careful. It is
 always tricky between sexes if the relationship is tricky anyway. In the good old days
 when I was a child my mother was furious that I signed a birthday card to another boy
 (aged 8?) with 'love' (!).
 Jump back into the past.

- 95 p. 19
 Boy - meaningless exclamation here
Reference to living with husband and wife who argue a lot.
 Scrapes - problems (from doing what they shouldn't) -
 p. 20
- 100 *Strange discussion between Jerry and Denise.*
Table manners
'outer Oliveness'
 stripped away - peeled off, taken away.
A funeral - but we don't yet know exactly whose.
- 105 *Should we, as readers, now recap on the last conversation about having kids, not wanting arguments at home.....*
 Casket - coffin
 wake - the 'celebration' on the evening before the funeral (here). It varies
 p. 21
- 110 reading(s) - something that is read out publicly
 sip - usually *nippen*
 beaky - like a beak. Birds have beaks instead of mouths
 pallbearer - the people who carry a coffin at a funeral
Rhetorical question 'Who was to help her?'
- 115 ***Where is the climax to the story? The turning point? Who are you, as the reader, worrying about at the moment? Where do you think the narrative is going?***
- p. 22
- 120 to give s.o. the willies - *macht verrückt, löst Panik aus*, but somehow I imagine 'the willies' as being more dramatic than this. It is slang.
 Oomph - (slang) energy
 p. 23
- 125 nitwits - This is what the German (or Dutch) immigrants were called in US at the end of the 19th century when people wanted to make them look stupid - it comes from *nichtswissen*- nitwits - idiots.
 Appalled - horrified
 p. 24
- 130 shudder - *schlottern* may be
 he could not shake (it off), get rid of it
 middle of the page - 'an apartment was found' - passive. Not 'X found her an apartment'.
There really are people who have never lived alone.
His life is 'unbearable', he is 'alarmed', Olive 'was a frightening stranger' (p. 25)
 smirk - laugh at
- 135 (*'Pathetic' - as in the Piano Player*)
Middle of 25 : 'He thought the beauty must be an assault' - meaning?
 p. 26
- 140 encumbrance - *Belastung*
No cake this time.
In the middle of the page 'he remembersS' - reminds us that we are in a story in a story
 dread - fear

- p. 27 trepidation - fear and trembling (a word from astronomy)
 foreboding - fear that you know something bad is going to happen
 compassion - *this always sounds bigger to me than 'Mitleid' but it is just that!*
- 145 p. 28
 struggling - not ok, *sich abquälen*
 'their inner selves brushing up against the other' - *what do you see or imagine?*
Climax? Turning point?
- p. 29
- 150 (*Olive is afraid of water but Henry is drowning in cobwebs. Spinnengewebe*)
 square : square dancing you know as US (and Scottish?) but to be square = old-fashioned
 tap your foot - *klopfen?*
 'I cannot abide....' = I cannot stand....; = I dislike intensely (idiom)
- p. 30
- 155 unrelenting - never giving up - continuous
 accusatory - seems to be accusing
 to grit your teeth - to bite on your teeth
One more day - meaning, another day I have survived (like AA)?
- p. 31
- 160 *Here the narration starts again where we left it on page 18.*
 The mighty fortress = *the famous Luther hymn*
 gravity - seriousness a n d *Erdanziehungskraft* (*There is no gravity - or little - in space*)
 chowder - a thick (American) soup
Compare Jerry here (bottom of p 31), Jerry pp.20/21, earlier and then also p.33
- 165 p. 32 fresh as a daisy - = *putzmunter*
Towards the bottom of the page: Christopher is angry with his father. 'He doesn't want people alone'. An important statement? Followed by Denise's (p.33)
 stateliness - may be *Pracht und Würde*
- p. 34
- 170 fleeting - passing quickly
 kernel = *Kern* in a botanical sense but also more.
 dismissed - *abgetan*
 deflated - when the air has gone out (of a balloon or a tyre), but also after a lot of excitement
- 175 ludicrous - laughable.
- Please re-read the last two pages if you don't have time to do more!**
Obviously we'll be talking about which aspects of the story reflect certain aspects of life that we recognize and/or think worth discussing.
- 180 *Can you trace how you felt about the relationship between Henry and Denise?*
How has the story affected your picture of Olive?
How has the story affected your feelings about the author?
Did you find any humour between the sadness?
- 185 p. 20 'You poor, poor child'
 p.21 Who was to help her?
 p. 28 'I will take care of you'
 p. 31 'You can learn to love someone'. p. 33 : 'Go!'