

# AWAKENED WOMAN

ELINORE BARRY



## Sixteenth Installment

"Do you know, dear, I haven't had a ride with you in a dog's age. I think I'll cut out the golf today and go with you. Take me on, will you?" Neil spoke with smiling carelessness but the look in his eyes gave him away.

"Of course, what time will you get here?" She spoke casually. Neil would never guess the turmoil of unhappiness under that calm. Did men ever divine things the way women did? One man perhaps... Robert? as the name stabbed her she turned away quickly, scarcely hearing Neil's answer, "I'll come home to lunch I think. Then we'll have the whole afternoon together."

E-en in her pain Joyce heard the change in Neil's voice. That last word was spoken with so touchingly confident and happy a note.

"All right, I'll be ready. Good-bye," and she ran upstairs and shut herself in her room. There she sat down on the edge of the couch-bed and clenched her hands, staring dry-eyed out of the big window to the distant mountains.

Joyce was wrapped in a mood of warm compassion for Neil. She felt she could not add another unkindness to the many that Frills had inflicted upon him. His eyes haunted her, and she felt more utterly miserable than she had at any time since she had awakened to find herself occupying another woman's shoes. She and his mother that way.

Riding off with Joyce that afternoon, Neil was in high spirits, with an elation in his manner that filled Joyce with shame. She rode in silence, hardly answering his questions, and not looking at him.

Neil soon fell in with her mood as they rode along and no longer bothered her with conversation. Gradually then she began to feel remorse, and wished she could be less surly with Neil. He tried so hard to please her in everything, to adapt himself to her moods. It struck Joyce suddenly how much of that sort of thing he must have been doing in his married life.

"Sam says McBready has a new lot of horses in," remarked Joyce, "did he tell you there's a man from Salinas who would like to buy Fire Queen?"

"Yeah," replied Neil, eyeing her sidewise, perhaps to see if her general expression matched the friendly casualness of her voice. "I said I'd like to get rid of her myself but I'd have to consult you about the matter. I hate the sight of the damn brute after what she nearly did to you, dear."

A flash of amusement curled the corners of Joyce's mouth for a moment as she remarked, "You needn't consult me. I'm quite satisfied with Rosita, thank you."

"Really? Gosh that's great. Sure relieves my mind." A little later they dismounted and sat down on a slope overlooking the valley to eat the package of sandwiches and fruit Joyce had brought. To her relief Neil talked about Manzanita topics: his mother's condition, Paul's departure, Sam's progress in the correspondence course, plans for the new subdivision north of Manzanita, and so on.

He finally stretched out on the ground and put his head in her lap. Joyce had just stroked back a lock of hair from his forehead, thinking absently that Neil ought to be doing something about the increasing thinness of his hair, when the thud of a horse's hoofs in the distance caught her ear. She stiffened and glanced up with an apprehensive fear clenching at her heart and stopping its beat for a moment.

There, in an opening between clumps of oak trees about sixty yards away, on the trail they had just left, rode Robert Ainsworth! He did not see her at first. Then his idly roving glance turned to the couple on the ground. His eyes met Joyce's, and a quick smile of recognition spread over his face. Then his look dropped to the figure of Neil lying with his head in her lap. A quizzical shade passed over his face.

"Hello, Joyce!" he shouted. His horse leaped forward under the spur of his heel, and they galloped up the slope. Before Neil could stumble to his feet Ainsworth was drawing rein nearly upon them.

"This precise situation," he said easily, "demands a galloping retreat on my part, but I'm too inquisitive to be so gallant. I prefer to advance and see what happens instead!"

Joyce's self-possession left her entirely. She stared numbly at the two men, miserably aware that they were both looking to her for explanation, and even more miserably aware that she knew not how to begin.

Neil was the first to come to Joyce's rescue. "I beg your pardon," he said, courteously, "you seem to know my wife?"

The quizzical smile deepened on Robert's face. "No, I seem rather to have made a mistake," he began. A new, almost insolent note in his voice whipped Joyce into anger. All at once she knew what her course must be. It mattered little to her what the outcome of this meeting was; she was determined not to be led into further deceptions.

"No mistake at all," she said quietly. "Neil, he's lying if he says he doesn't know me—"

She looked from one to the other of the men. Neil's expression was that of the same partly-repressed hurt that he had shown when Matland's name had been mentioned. She knew at once that he thought Robert had taken Matland's place in Frills' life, but that his value of decency and dignity was holding him in check. Neil's immediate, unconscious reaction to this situation did not surprise her; he was showing no reversal of his personality.

Robert, however, had suddenly become a stranger to her. Was this her "perfect companion," was this the man whose subtlety and sympathy she had so deliriously counted on? He sat on his horse coolly and looked down on them with an expression of amused cynicism. If this attitude were a cloak for his hurt feelings, Joyce thought swiftly, it was a less lovely one than Neil's!

These valuations passed through Joyce's mind in one galloping second, while she stood there helplessly, wondering where to begin.

"May I have the pleasure of meeting your husband?" Robert asked, smiling.

Joyce looked at him. "Get off your horse, please," she answered, "there's a lot to be straightened out and it'll take some time. . . . Robert Ainsworth, this is Neil Packard, my husband. . . . The men acknowledged the introduction. Neil curtly, Robert with the same hard amusement that so offended Joyce.

"Charmed," said Ainsworth lightly.

"Oh, don't talk that way!" Joyce cried. "I don't know you at all in this mood—you're making it terribly hard for me—"

Robert threw back his head and laughed. "Think, Joyce, what a lot I'm going to learn from this meeting! Think of the value of it all to a novelist! Why, I wouldn't be missing it for anything! I only wish I had the pen of an Elinor Glyn to write it up adequately—"

Neil drew forward. "I don't think my wife and I have time to stop and listen to that sort of damn' drivel from you—" he began hotly, when Joyce interposed.

"Oh, this is all so fantastic! Please, please, don't begin a fight over it, when neither of you really knows a bit what it's all about. . . . Neil, I've been trying to make up my mind to tell you—Robert, there's a good deal due to you, too! I hadn't expected to tell you both at once, but since it's happened this way, for Heaven's sake don't make it so difficult for me! I want to tell both of you the truth!"

She turned to her husband. "Neil, you never heard of Joyce Ashton, did you? Answer me that, Neil?"

"You don't mean Joyce Abbott, do you Frills?"

"No, no, I don't. . . . Tell me this, Neil, what was my name before you married me? . . . Don't look at me as if I were crazy! What was my name before you married me?"

"Why, Frills, this is nonsense! Don't you know your own name? It was Florence Hilton, of course. What's that got to do—"

"Oh, will you please let me tell you? Sit down, both of you, this is going to take a long time. Please don't begin by thinking I'm crazy. You've both heard of amnesia victims, of course? Did you know you'd married one, Neil? Did you know that Florence Hilton was a girl without a past, without a life? You've got to help me tell this story, Neil, because I remember nothing before the morning after Fire Queen threw me on my head!"

Neil was staring at her dumb-founded. "You're not serious, Frills? Why—what—when—"

Robert Ainsworth said, "Lord! Tell us what you're driving at, Joyce!"

Joyce suddenly found it possible to talk to these two men. It was as if her mind had for some time been preparing the story it had to tell, so that the words came swiftly, tensely, dramatically. She told them of being born Joyce Ashton, of her early life in New England, of her aunt and uncle, of her work in Philadelphia and then of her start toward the Coast in search of adventure.

"I remember getting into the taxicab in Chicago in the snow—that sort of light snow when the streets still aren't quite wet, but the dirt makes them sticky. The taxi skidded violently—there was a crash—and when I woke up, I was in a bed, on a sleeping porch,

looking out at a tree whose oranges were growing. . . . I came onto the porch and asked me how I felt! That was you, Neil, whom I in my first appalled state fancied to have been my kidnapper!"

"Why on earth—say, how on earth have you kept this all to yourself? How long ago was all this, Joyce?" It was Ainsworth speaking. Neil seemed too stunned to take in the significance of it all.

"I don't know just how I have kept it all. Of course at first I was so terrified I couldn't think, much less act. Then I've always been awfully reticent—hated scenes—and I usually followed the line of least resistance. Neil was just leaving to go on a business trip to Chicago. He kissed me good-bye while I was still in that paralyzed state, and I was left to figure things out for myself! It was all terrible, of course, but in some ways it was fascinating. Your house, Neil, is so lovely, and the outdoorsness appealed to me—it all was so different from the pinched, dark, dreary life I'd been leading in the Philadelphia boarding-house that I hung greedily on. . . . And then, of course, I found out about Frills. . . ."

"Frills was the vicious imp that had taken possession of my body while I was an amnesia victim. I found out that as well as having gotten Joyce Ashton a good husband and a beautiful home, she had made that husband desperately unhappy. been a cross little beast."

Neil looked up. "Do you mean to tell me you don't remember having married me?"

"Yes, Neil, just that. I'm trying to tell you that I remember nothing between the time of the taxi accident in Chicago two years ago, and the recent accident on Fire Queen!"

"Humph," Neil looked closely at his wife, as if trying to fathom some hidden reason she might have for making a fool of him.

"Neil, haven't you noticed that I've been different lately? Look back to your return from Chicago that last trip. Haven't I been less reckless, less troublesome generally, than the Frills you married?"

(Continued next week)

## Four Men Lose Lives When Trucks Crash On Highway

Wilson, June 22.—The crash of two trucks that immediately went up in flames took the lives of four men near here today while a fifth escaped with slight injuries.

Marion Truluck, of Lake City, S. C., and Frank Brockington, of Olanta, S. C., were instantly killed when two machines crashed head-on near Lucama, nine miles from here. They were riding together.

Herman Waldron, of Lumberton, pinned beneath his steering wheel, was burned to death—his body so charred it was unrecognizable.

Vick Graves, of Monroe, Waldron's companion, died in a hospital a few hours after the collision of burns that covered his body from head to foot.

## Minstrel Show Will Be Staged At Arbor Grove

A minstrel show will be given at Arbor Grove Methodist church near Millers Creek Friday evening, June 29, at 8 o'clock under the auspices of the church league. . . . Colored people, including members of the popular Sunset Quartet of this city, will be in the performance.

The admission charge will be 10 and 15 cents and the proceeds will be used to defray the expenses of the Epworth League members to the Epworth League institute.

## Kiwanians Hear Solicitor Jones

Speaks On Crime Situation In Wilkes; Club Favors War On Crime

Law enforcement and the crime wave were discussed by Solicitor John R. Jones at the weekly luncheon meeting of the Kiwanis club Friday and the club went on record as solidly behind the movement to curb crime in Wilkes county.

Attorney J. H. Whicker was program chairman for the day and presented the solicitor. The present crime wave started during the World War, the speaker asserted, and a spirit of indifference on the part of the public has contributed to its success in breaking down the morale of the country.

Solicitor Jones made what members of the Kiwanis club considered one of the ablest addresses of his career.

The club voted to pass a formal resolution in support of the movement against crime and to place it upon the minutes of the club.

The board of directors announced that the club has purchased a page advertisement in the premium catalogue of the Great Wilkes Fair association.

T. A. Finley, county game and forest warden, was a guest of his father, Judge T. B. Finley, and Jones Holcomb, of Elkin and North Wilkesboro, was a visiting Kiwanian.

## Francis Sisson Makes Attack On Bank Law

Hot Springs, Va., June 22.—Francis H. Sisson, president of the American Bankers association, today launched an attack upon what he termed the "basic unsoundness" of the Glass-Steagall banking bill in an address before the Virginia Bankers association.

Mr. Sisson contended that "the basic thing has never been touched" by the bill, and "that is what we have to come to—I refer to the English-Canadian system."

"I am sorry to have to disagree with your president about the Glass-Steagall bill," Mr. Sisson said. "In my point of view it is an exceedingly dangerous bill that will ultimately force its own repeal."

## Insurance Rate Increase To Be Effective June 30

Raleigh, June 23.—The recently granted 7.6 per cent average increase in workmen's compensation insurance rates will become effective June 30, Insurance Commissioner Dan C. Boney announced today.

Since the compensation law became effective in 1929 there has been one other increase. The carriers were allowed a 3.5 per cent boost in 1931 to take care of tax increases.

Petitions of carriers for increases of 12 to 15 per cent, the former being asked by mutual companies and the latter by stock companies, recently were denied by Boney.

## Hamilton Expects to Oppose Abernethy in 1934 Contest

Raleigh, June 22.—Luther Hamilton, Carteret county's representative in the general assembly, told friends here today he expects to soon announce his candidacy for the congressional seat from the third district, which is now occupied by Charles L. Abernethy, of Craven county.

Graham A. Barden, of Craven, recently announced he would seek to unseat Abernethy and the congressman will be a candidate for re-election. Barden is also a state legislator.

## Dollar Tax Levied On Outdoor Signs

Merchants, Warehousemen and Others Must Pay Tax or Have Signs Destroyed

The revenue act of the 1933 general assembly placed a check on outdoor advertising by merchants, warehouses and others, it is revealed. The state revenue department is already setting up machinery for collection of taxes on outdoor signs.

Under the 1933 revenue act, all private concerns using the land-owners of North Carolina to erect signs to advertise their products must pay a tax of \$1 per sign to the state in taxes, but the maximum tax to be collected from any private concern for signs is \$500.

A feature of the plan to make the outdoor advertisers pay their tax is to issue to each concern advertising on the highways a metal tag similar to the state automobile license. Each tag carries a number and on every sign erected after July 1 as well as those already erected must have the tag tacked on the sign so that it can be seen.

Filling stations, stores, out-of-state concerns and others must pay this tax of one dollar per sign

unless the signs are located on the property on which the place of business is located.

Unless the advertising signs carry the license plates the state revenue department and highway commission employees will be instructed to summarily destroy them after that date.

Revenue Commissioner A. Maxwell believes the state's revenue from outdoor advertising will be materially increased by the new taxes on outdoor signs.

O. S. Thompson, assistant commissioner of revenue, said that 50,000 metal tags had been obtained to sell to outdoor advertisers. He also pointed out, the tags must cover the outdoor signs by July 1.

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 Hamburger : EGG  
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 buy good shoes—then have them repaired at—  
**Right-Way Shoe Shop**  
 "A Little Neater, a Little Better."

## Lady Took Cardui And Got Rid of Pain In Her Side

"Last summer, my health was bad, so I began taking Cardui," writes Mrs. H. E. Slaughter, of Norman, Okla. "My mother had given me Cardui in girlhood, so naturally I turned to it when I felt I needed it. I felt run-down and a general weakness. I had bad, dizzy headaches when everything would seem to dance before my eyes. My right side pained me so much, but since taking Cardui the pain has left me. I have taken several bottles of Cardui and have improved a great deal."

Cardui is sold at drug stores here.

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 Meadows Building North Wilkesboro, N. C.

## PAY YOUR County Taxes

You will save money for yourself and at the same time help your county. A settlement now will be greatly appreciated.

**W. B. SOMERS, Sheriff**



*Camel's costlier tobaccos taste better*

**Pay Special License Taxes Before July 1st To Avoid Penalty 5% Per Month Will Be Added On and After July 1st, 1933**

Service Stations, Garages, Dealers in Pistols, Cartridges and Fireworks; Pressing Clubs and Laundries; Installment paper Dealers; Loan Agents and Brokers; Lightning Rod Agents; Automotive Equipment Dealers, Peddlers, and Horse and Mule Dealers, are among those liable for special county license tax.

**W. B. SOMERS,**  
 Sheriff and County Tax Collector

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