

BROKEN

RUBY M. AYRES

Final Installment

"There is no happiness for me. That's all finished. Don't look so tragic. We must all live our own lives and work out our own salvation—if there is such a thing. I'm glad to have seen you again—it hurts, the way you sent me about my business."

"I shall never forgive myself, Julie."

"You must; there isn't anything really to forgive. I wasn't too kind to you either, Lawrence—"

"You gave me the only happiness I have ever known, and that is why I want to give you your happiness. She drew back sharply."

"Why—what do you mean?" "That I want to take you back to Chittenham. He's a fine fellow, Julie, and you mean everything in the world to him. There was a time when I hated him, but lately, now we understand each other—I can see why I never stood a chance when he was concerned—"

"What do you mean? How dare you say such things to me?"

"I dare say anything if it means your happiness."

"My happiness is no concern of yours—"

"She turned and began to walk away from him. Her heart was beating fast and her eyes burned with the tears which she dared not let fall."

In the evening Schofield called at the little hotel. He brought a large bunch of roses and he kissed her hands as she took the flowers from him.

"Say you forgive me, Julie?" "Of course I forgive you." But in her heart she knew that if she had cared for him, forgiveness would not have been possible. "Of course I forgive you," she said again with an effort; "but in return you must promise me something, will you, Lawrence?"

"If I can—you know I will."

"Then promise me that you will not tell anyone in London where I am."

He hesitated, and she said again sharply: "Most of all you must promise me not to tell Mr. Chittenham."

Schofield looked away from her.

"I have already wired to him. I wired this evening after you left me."

She drew a deep breath, her heart was beating so fiercely that it seemed to choke her.

"You think . . . do you think he will come here?" she asked.

"I am sure he will come."

"Yes . . . yes, I suppose so." She touched his arm. "And you are the good Samaritan who will bring us together again," she said and he did not hear the mocking note in her voice.

But when he had gone she shed no tears. She went up to her room, leaving the roses he had brought lying on the table in the deserted salon. She dragged her few clothes from the drawers in the little painted chest, and hurriedly packed them.

Her only thought was to avoid seeing Giles Chittenham.

"It's all over, that part of my life, it's finished for ever," she told herself over and over again. "I don't want him now—I don't want to see him! I could never forgive him or believe in him again."

She told the landlady that she was going back to England, but at the station she took a ticket to Lausanne.

"He will never think of looking for me there," she told herself exultantly. "He will think it is the last place I should ever go back to."

She changed her name to Langdon and took a room in a little old-fashioned chalet overlooking the lake, and when she found the time beginning to hang impossibly on her hands, she advertised for pupils to whom to teach English.

For one thing she needed the money, and for another, she felt that she would go mad if she could not find occupation.

But except at intervals she was not unhappy.

And so the late summer and the autumn passed, and the cold winds came, and the grey days, and the mountains were ridden in veils of mist.

What was Giles doing? One night she dreamed of him so vividly that she was sure he must be somewhere near her, and for two days she was afraid to go out for fear that she might meet him.

"I will go home," she told herself, and tried to believe that it was sheer longing for England that drew her, and that the presence of Chittenham made no difference.

"I will go home for Christmas," she decided, and from that moment her spirits rose, and the people in the house smiled when they saw the change in her.

"She had had good news," they told one another, and were quite sure that it was an unhappy love affair that had hitherto caused the sadness in Julie's eyes.

And then a week before she was to leave, Julie suddenly felt a great longing to climb the St. Bernard once more.

She made inquiries and was told that she could not go without a guide.

"It is quite true—they found her along the road last night—in the snow. She was lost—the poor lady. They brought her here and put her to bed, but she is ill . . ."

Chittenham staggered to his feet. "Let me see her—let me be sure . . ."

He followed the daughter of the house up the narrow, creaking wooden stairs. There was a shaded lamp burning on a bedside table, and its light fell full on her face which was half turned from him.

Chittenham gave one glance— "Julie! Oh, thank God!"

He bent his head and pressed his lips to her hand again and again, kissing her fingers, an wrist, and soft warm palm, till suddenly she stirred restlessly and turned.

For a moment she lay quite still, staring up at him with far-away, dreaming eyes, then suddenly the tears welled up into them, and her lips quivered as she said in a voice all broken with sobbing:

"Oh, you belong to me—you belong to me—"

"Always—always . . ."

She began to cry weakly. "You were so long coming to me. I thought you didn't care any more."

"Julie—"

His voice broke; he slipped an arm beneath her head, drawing her to rest against him. She drew back a little, the tears wet on her face, her voice broken with pitiful sobbing as she asked once more:

"Oh, do you still belong to me?" . . . and Chittenham answered again as he bent to find her lips—: "Always, always . . . always."

THE END

A tall man in a big overcoat stood there—he asked for Miss Langdon. He spoke eagerly as if with great excitement.

"She has but a moment gone out—if Monsieur would put himself to the great trouble of coming in to wait."

"I will certainly wait."

It had begun to snow afresh, and the shoulders of Chittenham's coat were white as he stepped into the little hall-way.

He had been visiting some people in London whose daughter had come home for the Christmas holidays from school in Switzerland. She had been showing amateur photographs of her school friends, and amongst them was one of Julie.

Giles had been bored by her chatter, and had pushed the photographs aside when she pressed one more upon his notice.

"That's Miss Langdon, who comes to teach the Swiss girls English. She's a darling . . ."

And he had looked down into Julie's face. . . .

And now he was here—in a few minutes he would be with her, and holding her in his arms, he walked over to the window and stood looking out.

How long would she be? Every moment seemed an eternity.

"I will wait here till Miss Langdon comes in." Giles said obstinately.

But at ten o'clock she had still not returned.

Giles went to the front door and looked out, followed by Adolph.

The snow was falling so thickly that one could hardly see a yard ahead; there was a deep menace in the unbroken silence.

Chittenham looked at the man beside him.

"Well?" he said sharply, struck by something in Adolph's eyes.

"It would be good now to look for Mademoiselle," Adolph said. "I have friends—good fellows all. If Monsieur wishes it—"

"Let us start at once," Giles broke in.

He was afraid of the fear in his heart; he was conscious of nothing but despair when an hour later he was stumbling along through the blinding clogging snow with Adolph and half a dozen other men.

The lanterns they carried shed weird, dancing shadows on the whiteness of their feet; the flakes whirled in their faces choking them. It was as if all the human forces had ranged themselves as enemies against them, he thought, as he bent to ask Adolph in which direction they were going.

His heart seemed to stand still when the answer came.

"It was to the St. Bernard that Mademoiselle wished to go. For days she had talked of nothing else. I told her she must take a guide—she was disappointed but she said she would let me know."

"To the St. Bernard!" Chittenham stifled a groan. He might have known—might have guessed. It seemed now to his despair that he had been a blind fool not to realize from the beginning that she would come to this place, that he had ever needed a chance photograph to guide him.

They trampled on in silence which Chittenham broke at last to ask curiously:

"Is it ever possible to find any one who gets lost on such a night?"

"They have been found—often—"

"Alive!"

Adolph did not answer this, and Giles dared not press the question.

It was not until early morning that the snow ceased falling. It was getting light then—the faint outline of the mountains began to stand out against the darkness as if drawn by a ghostly hand.

Chittenham was nearly worn out, but he refused to go back or rest although the others often urged him to do so.

"Further on there is an inn where he can rest—the people who keep the inn are friends of mine," Adolph said.

But it was half an hour before they reached it—a small, unpretentious little building of wood, standing back from the roadway and half hidden by great drifts of snow.

Adolph tramped up to the door and knocked. There were lights in several of the windows, and the door opened almost immediately to admit the men into the warmth, stamping the caked snow and ice from their boots.

Chittenham dropped on to the nearest bench. It was not fatigue so much as despair that had beaten him.

Like a man in a dream he heard Adolph calling for brandy and hot coffee. He leaped back and closed his eyes. Everything seemed whirling about him; it was only the rough and kindly touch of Adolph's hand on his shoulder that roused him.

"Mademoiselle is here—with my friends," he said.

Chittenham started up as if what she was saying to her was what his mind might be.

believing eyes. "Here! . . . Oh, for God's sake, if it is not true . . ."

Chittenham gave one glance— "Julie! Oh, thank God!"

He bent his head and pressed his lips to her hand again and again, kissing her fingers, an wrist, and soft warm palm, till suddenly she stirred restlessly and turned.

For a moment she lay quite still, staring up at him with far-away, dreaming eyes, then suddenly the tears welled up into them, and her lips quivered as she said in a voice all broken with sobbing:

"Oh, you belong to me—you belong to me—"

"Always—always . . ."

She began to cry weakly. "You were so long coming to me. I thought you didn't care any more."

"Julie—"

His voice broke; he slipped an arm beneath her head, drawing her to rest against him. She drew back a little, the tears wet on her face, her voice broken with pitiful sobbing as she asked once more:

"Oh, do you still belong to me?" . . . and Chittenham answered again as he bent to find her lips—: "Always, always . . . always."

My Best Girl
By **KATHLEEN NORRIS**

That is the appealing title of our next great serial story.

Kathleen Norris wrote it. That in itself is a guarantee that it is a human, appealing, intensely interesting story about people of the kind you know.

"Maggie Johnson," the "Best Girl" of the story, works in the "Five-and-Ten." Her father is a letter-carrier. Her mother feels that she has married beneath her. Her older sister, "Liz," works in a beauty parlor.

Not much romance in Maggie Johnson's life, you would say. But Maggie finds it—finds it right in the "Five-and-Ten." You'll love Maggie, and you'll like "Joe," the boy who brings romance into the little shop girl's drab existence.

DON'T MISS THE FIRST INSTALMENT OF THIS GREAT NEW SERIAL. IT WILL BEGIN IN THIS PAPER JANUARY 1, 1930

WANTS

WANTED—Good man to handle ice in Elkin for the coming season. Good proposition for the right man. Apply in person to office of City Fuel Yard, North Wilkesboro, N. C. 2tp.

Maryland Bus will pass through Elkin January 7th, 1931. 1-1p

For Rent—Three room heated apartment, furnished or unfurnished. Call Mrs. Carl Chappell. Telephone 126-M.

REAL ESTATE

You can buy this one—A nine-room English bungalow on West Main street. This is why you'll want it—Basement: Garage for two cars, coal room, furnace room, storage space and two servants' quarters. First floor: One large bed room and two smaller ones. Bath room with heat and also electric heat, tub and shower bath. Rods and curtains, and built-in medicine cabinet. The house is wired for electric refrigerator, stove, toasters and percolators, with Walker electric dish washer, which rinses, and dries dishes without touching. Two large built-in kitchen cabinets. Outside improvements: Flagstone drive, brick walks, hedges, also other nice shrubbery already planted. Terms: One per cent down, balance over a period of 6, 10 or 20 years. You may say this is too good to be true. But if you will see us you will be convinced.

For Sale or Rent—5-room house in Arlington, price \$1600.00—\$16.00 down and \$16.00 per month and interest. Rent \$10.00 per month.

For Sale—9-room house in Jonesville, water, sewer and lights, close in, almost new. Price \$2500.00—\$500.00 down and \$20.00 per month on balance.

A few more nice building sites in "Arlington", our new and wonderful growing town. No street assessments, no town tax to pay. 1-2 mile to good graded and high school. Four churches nearby. Take a drive over to "Arlington" and you can see why there is no building in Elkin or Jonesville. It's all being done over in Arlington.

Buy a lot in "Arlington". Pay \$10 down and \$5.00 per month until paid for.

For anything in real estate, see us.

Here's Our Wish for Your Success

And a word of appreciation for the business given us during the past year.

We trust your dealings with us have been both pleasant and profitable, and we shall strive to please you with our service, little harder in the future to merit your business.

To you, we wish the best of everything, crowned with health, wealth and happiness.

Reich-Hayes Boren, Inc.

1900

1930