

# AWAKENED WOMAN

By Elinore Barry

## FIRST INSTALMENT

Even before she opened her eyes, Joyce was aware of being in a strange place. For the moment, however, she was still too drowsy to make any effort to move. A ache throbbed in her head. Her whole body felt heavy, weighed down by an insistent lassitude.

Then other sensations asserted themselves. Her fingers, moving languidly, sent to her drowsy brain the message of some sort of cool silken material under their sensitive tips.

She kept her eyes shut while she tried to think things out. She remembered perfectly now. . . . She was in a taxi going to the Hotel Blackstone in Chicago. It was sleeting, and in the traffic another machine skidded suddenly and crashed into them.

And then they had brought her—where? It didn't smell in the least like a hospital. And the bed was softer than any cot she had ever felt.

Suddenly she was afraid to open her eyes. Completely awake now, she lay tingling with curiosity, filled at the same time with a foreboding of some strange, frightening revelation to come.

Where could she be? At last she could stand the uncertainty no longer. Without moving she opened her eyes and stared straight ahead of her. Her first look showed a cluster of large oranges hanging like golden balls in the sunshine against a background of cloudless blue sky.

Oranges! She had never seen oranges actually growing. Still without moving she rolled her eyes from one side to the other. They traveled up the bed to her hands, lying inert on the satin cover. Suddenly she became aware of three separate facts so startling in their significance, that they set her heart to pumping and paralyzed her muscles.

She could never tell which shock was the first to register, the circle of tiny ornaments at the third finger of her left hand; the rumpled condition of the other side of the bed; or the cheerful masculine whistle coming from somewhere in the house close behind her!

A hot wave flooded her face and neck. But gradually her heart quieted down. She relaxed a trifle, breathed deeply, and tried to bring her whirling brain back to normal.

"It's the most incredible thing I ever . . . ever heard!" she thought, desperately, fighting against a feeling of faintness. "It must be a bad dream! . . . I land in Chicago in November on a dark, cold, snowy afternoon; get in a taxi . . . something bumps into the taxi and . . . I wake up the next morning and find that it's summertime, and that . . . I'm married! How could it have happened. How could it have happened. How—?"

The whistle seemed to come a little nearer. Joyce clutched at the bedclothes in a suddenly renewed panic of terror. If it were not a dream now, this instant, then what had happened while she was unconscious?

Suddenly a telephone bell rang. The whistling stopped abruptly. She heard the click of the receiver being lifted . . . then "Yes!" in a deep, pleasant voice. She listened tensely.

"Oh, Laurine? Hello! . . . She's still asleep, I think. No, Doc says it's nothing serious, but it sure was lucky it wasn't worse. . . . Yes, you're absolutely right—What? . . . Well, I ask her last month not to ride that brute, but you know how she is. . . . I'm leaving in a few minutes. . . . Yes. Got to go to Chicago for a conference. . . . Come over sometime today and see how she is, will you? I hate to go off like this but I'm just going to have time to make the date. It's something I can't sidestep. . . . Yeah? Well, tell Paul to be a good boy while I'm away. So long, Laurine. So you all in 'bout two or three weeks."

Click. Steps across the floor. The sound of steps approaching the bed set her pulses hammering. Curiosity and fear mingled in her feelings as she looked up. She was so frightened that it did not occur to her to pretend to be asleep.

She saw a man of medium height . . . thirtyish . . . ruddy . . . blue eyes and light . . . tan face and tan suit . . . light brown hair, combed back smoothly . . . face rather wide across the jaw . . . short nose . . . mouth cut in clean curves like a girl's . . . Nothing villainous in the appearance of the man.

"Hello, honey! How do you feel this morning?" He was smiling down at her with complete kindness.

Joyce swallowed hard, unable to answer. Under the sheet she clenched her hands, trying to still the trembling of her body.

A worried look dimmed the smile of the man's face. He sat down on the side of the bed and leaned toward her, putting his hands on her shoulders.

"Why, what's the matter, dear? Head pretty bad? Oh, I say, did I hurt you? You poor kid!" He drew back a little. Joyce had involuntarily flinched when his hands touched her.

The thought flashed into Joyce's confused mind that if he fancied she were really ill, he might after all not go away. And she must have time to recover from the shock and decide what to do. She must be left alone. She would have to speak; everything depended on her making this effort.

"Oh, I'm . . . I'm all right," she stammered hardly above a whisper.

A look of relief came into the face above her. "Whew, but you gave me a scare. Frills," he exclaimed. "Sure you're all right? Doc's coming over today to take another look at you. Better stay in bed and get a rest. If you're really all right, I've got to dash to the city to get my train for Chicago. But I won't go if you're not. You don't seem just right."

"Oh, no, really, I'm all right," she said hastily. "I just have a headache. I'll be all right."

"You're sure? . . . Good! . . . Well, good bye, honey. Take care of yourself. You can always reach me at the Blackstone, you know. I'll expect to hear from you."

He leaned over, took her face between his large firm hands and kissed her. After he had kissed her twice, while Joyce tried furiously to recall the blush she felt burning her face, he added, hesitatingly, "Look here, Frills, I wish you'd . . . go a little easier while I'm away, will you. I'll be worried about you all the time if I think you're . . . pulling any more reckless stunts, you know. And—"

"Oh, no, don't worry about me!" interrupted Joyce, wishing he would stop kissing her and go away. "I won't do a thing, I . . . I know I'm going to feel like being very quiet for . . . for awhile!"

This sort of answer was evidently unexpected, Joyce decided, when she saw the surprise in his face mingled with relief. In speaking before, his voice had revealed a note of apprehension, as if he were afraid of the way his words would be received. "What sort of disposition can I have had?" she wondered.

"Well, good bye, honey," he said once more, and kissing her again, he stood up. "I've got to hop off, I'll wire today from somewhere along the line."

Joyce lay and listened to his steps receding inside the house. Then she drew a long breath and sat up suddenly. "So that's my husband. He has a very nice voice, and I don't feel exactly afraid of him. I think he has a—kind, pleasant look on his face."

Her thoughts paused in confusion. What did it mean? Gradually her senses of dizzy panic came back to puzzled curiosity. Lying there in the sweet scented sunshine her mind grew clearer and she tried to fathom the situation unemotionally. But it was no use; the pieces didn't fit; she had nothing to go on.

Swinging her feet over the side of the bed, she found a pair of high-heeled satin bedroom slippers which she put on, and then stood up and stretched cautiously. She felt somewhat stiff and lame, especially all down the side, shoulder, elbow and knee.

"Ouch! That must be the side I fell on. To think that I always wanted to learn to ride horseback and now I've done it and had a bad fall besides—and I don't know a thing about it!"

She went over to the big window of the sleeping porch and stood for a few moments in the warm sunshine, gazing out eagerly. Beneath her lay a terraced garden, full of a blaze of flowers. A high hedge surrounded the garden, down one side of which grew a row of slender Italian cypresses, stiff and dark and theatrical looking. Beyond the hedge stretched a huge orchard of fruit trees. Joyce stared down at it in amazement. She had never seen such an enormous orchard in her life. The rows of white-blossomed trees seemed to run out for miles and miles over a flat valley, like a drift of snow across a huge plain. Along the farther horizon undulated a line of stajange, puckery, treeless hills against the sky. As her glance followed them to the right, she saw that beyond the low hills rose high mountains.

She turned reluctantly away from the view of the sunny garden and the open country, and entered the house. She found a large bedroom with flowered cretonne curtains and cushions . . . ivory-tinted wicker furniture . . . a little pile of silk underclothes at the foot of the big smooth bed . . . luxurious dressing table with a low seat in front of it . . . a partly-open door at the right giving her a glimpse into a closet full of clothes . . . at the left a wide-open door into

a spacious white tiled bathroom. Suddenly, as she stood motionless on the threshold, feeling like an intruder entering some one else's bedroom, she caught sight of a girl with short wavy hair, clad in a delectable mauve pyjama suit. With a gasp of surprise she realized it was her own image reflected in one of the two full length mirrors which flanked the dressing table!

Well! . . . She moved hastily up close to the mirror and examined herself with interest. Fascinated, she examined her face more closely and smiled suddenly with pleased surprise at the image in the glass. "You look really a whole lot . . . prettier than you ever did in Philadelphia, I must admit! The bathroom was another exciting discovery. It was a large, square room, elaborately tiled, with magnificently modern fittings and fixtures. Joyce gasped with pleasure as she looked.

Through the big open window at the left, the sun was streaming in, bringing with it that indescribably sweet odor which had greeted Joyce on her waking. Part of it must come from those acres of trees in bloom beyond the garden, part of it from the waxen blossoms of the orange tree.

In spite of the mystery, in spite of the complications she was about to meet, it was impossible, after a two-year-long diet of Mrs. Lowrie's boarding house, for Joyce not to feel a thrill of pleasure at finding herself in these lovely surroundings. With a little hop of sheer excitement, she crossed his big bathroom and pushed open another door which she noticed stood just slightly ajar.

"Oh! His . . . his dressing room, I suppose," she murmured, hesitating on the threshold. She entered shyly, crossed to the dresser, and took from it a large photograph in a heavy silver frame. Her own face smiled out at her.

It was her own; but Joyce felt, nevertheless, that she must be looking at her double. "Of course, it's re-

## UNIQUE DOME AT WORLD'S FAIR

Built Like a Suspension Bridge, It Will Surprise Visitors at Century of Progress Event in City of Chicago

Chicago.—The Travel and Transport Dome, which is nearing completion on the Century of Progress Exposition grounds is one of the most startling structures ever conceived.

Leaders of the non-competitive, paid-for-in-advance exposition believe it and the "sky ride" will be the most discussed architectural surprises at the "World's Fair," which opens 14 weeks from Friday.

The travel and transportation area covers 75 acres. One of its many buildings cost \$1,000,000 and is only temporary. Another cost \$750,000, a third \$400,000.

The center of the area is the dome. It is the first dome ever constructed on the pinnacle of a suspension bridge. The interior diameter is 310 feet, clear of any obstruction because the roof is suspended from outside cables. It is called "the dome that breathes" because it expands or contracts as the temperature varies.

By June 1 the dome and its related buildings will contain a history of transportation complete in every detail from birch bark canoes to rocket and multi-motored airplanes. There also will be a glimpse into the future.

The fair, celebrating an unprecedented 100 years of human advancement, is divided into three major divisions.

It touched a lot, and the shorn hair and the pearls and the evening gown make a difference. But I . . . don't know . . . there's something so assured and sophisticated and daring about it that it doesn't look like me, not like Joyce Ashton. . . . CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

visions, progress in travel and transportation, science and agriculture.

Less than a mile from the dome stands an exact reproduction of old Fort Dearborn. In the history of the log fort, and the nearby modern exhibits is a contrast which explains why transportation was considered so important.

If a man had traveled from the site of Detroit to the site of Chicago in the year one, it would have taken him from 12 to 25 days by the speediest method then known. Approximately 1,800 years later, soldiers came here from Detroit to build Fort Dearborn. Transportation had not advanced. The trip required as long as it ever had.

Soon after that, mankind began to speed up. Now a person may leave Detroit in the morning, fly to any Chicago airport, transfer to an amphibian plane, fly to the exposition grounds and return to Detroit by nightfall.

"That," said Chief Harry C. Warner of the basic sciences division today, "is an example of how the world has progressed in the last 100 years as contrasted to the tedious progress of former centuries."

As in other exposition divisions, action will be the keynote of the transportation exhibits. Even the battered old automobile of 1905 will be in action.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED IN 369 COUNTIES

Raleigh, N. C.—Public school projects numbering 869 and costing \$517,862 have been completed in 66 counties of the State as a part of the work relief program of the State, the Governor's Office of Relief reports.

This school work, all approved in advance by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, involved construction of buildings, additions to buildings, construction of gymnasiums and physical education rooms, painting, repairing, planting, level-

ing and beautifying grounds, digging wells, improving bus routes, construction bus waiting rooms for children, and other projects. Local communities have provided the materials and equipment for the work, the cost of labor alone coming from the relief funds.

Watauga County has completed no projects, the report shows.



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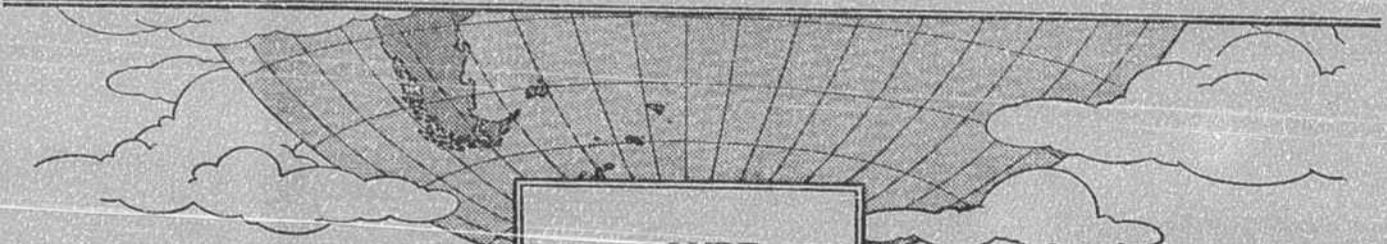
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