

# Rapture Beyond

by KATHARINE HEWLIN BURT

## TWELFTH INSTALLMENT

"My jewels," Marcella faltered close to Jocelyn's ear. "They're not where they should be. You've taken them?"

"I don't know anything about them, Mother."

But she was remembering her father's silent visit—the visit she had called fruitless—and the footmarks that came and went across her floor.

Marcella kept on urgently pleading: "You stood there staring at me. You looked like a sleepwalker but I'm sure you saw the jewels. I was so startled that I left the key there in the lock, and the cloth on the wall. Of course after I had gone to bed the place was still, you went back. I am sure you took them. I didn't return them."

"I didn't take them."

"Please, Jocelyn, my darling. I won't be angry. It's natural to love jewels. They are so wonderfully beautiful, they seem to be alive. I will forgive you. Don't be afraid of me. Jewels are brave things; they are full of fire. Only tell me . . . for God's sake!"

"Mother, I didn't take them."

Marcella released her, dropped down at the foot of the bed and rocked herself to and fro, holding her dark disheveled head in both hands.

"Some one has taken them. I must think." She sprang up. "We'll look. We'll find them. We'll look everywhere. Don't say a word. No one must know but you and me. You see how I trust

you? Get up quietly and help me look. We'll find them. We must find them."

They both looked into impossible places. They both stood and tried to imagine traps and corners and dark spots where they might look with hope.

At breakfast time quite suddenly Marcella regained composure. Her face looked in its passion. Austere, pale, in her accustomed dress with the silver cross again upon her bosom, she rearranged the apartment and bade Jocelyn go into the dining-room. "I can't eat, Mother. I feel sick."

"You must eat. We must not let Mary guess that anything is wrong. No one must know. That is more important than you can possibly imagine. You see, I am admitting you into my confidence. If I can't trust you, my own daughter . . ."

Jocelyn's eyes fell. She crept in and took her usual place at the daintily appointed breakfast table. Mary, dull and methodical like some clumsy but well-oiled machine, waited upon her.

Jocelyn loved Nick. Even now she loved him; this knowing chamber-in at bedroom windows, this beaten man whose friends had hard faces and quick eyes. . . . Here pain took her heart in both its hands and squeezed it.

She had herself admitted these men into her mother's house with her own hands. "If I cannot trust my own daughter . . ."

Thoughts came to Jocelyn like this, in sharp stitches through her mind. She could not swallow her breakfast.

Plunging herself away from the breakfast table, she hurried to her bathroom and washed and washed her hands.

She knew the truth now. This was what her daring, her brave adventuring had brought her. The truth. The face of her fear, uglier than fear itself. Now she knew what name her father and Jockyleward carried on the sordid implacable tongue of the law, he knew the secret of their wealth, their sudden poverty. Of their hidden and sordid homes that changed and changed.

Marcella came to her door and stood, cold and grave, on its threshold. She was entirely her old self now.

"I will take steps to discover the thief, Jocelyn, very quiet and private steps. There are reasons which you can't know . . ." ah, she did know, too many reasons . . . "why I must move very carefully. I will engage the services of a private detective. Meanwhile I entreat you, I command you—to say not a word, not so much as a breath about the jewels and my loss of them."

"I promise you, Mother. On my honor." Was that what honor meant—was she learning it now too late—an undivided loyalty?

"Not a word to any one, not even to Felix Kent."

Felix Kent; the name flourished in her ears with the sound of salvation. He rode life proudly with quiet and spur, knight errant. A warm current of reassurance flooded her chilled heart.

She would marry Felix Kent. At once.

Felix Kent had already left his Park Avenue apartment. She rang his office. Miss Deal's voice came with a brisk authoritative clicking:

"Mr. Kent's office, yes. . . . Yes, indeed, Miss Harlowe. . . . No, he's not here. . . . He will be back. . . . Yes, Miss Harlowe, he said positively that he would be back about noon. . . . Why, yes, Miss Harlowe, of course you may come here and wait for him."

The diamond air of the city sparkled when she came out into it. The atmosphere of Kent's office when she reached it, braced her mood. Miss Deal was briskly cordial:

"You haven't been to see us at all, have you, Miss Harlowe? After that first visit we rather hoped, you know, that you might make a habit of dropping in upon us. You were just like a child at a party, your eyes so bright! Mr. Kent and I found it so—refreshing. Your enthusiasm, I mean to say."

Jocelyn had flushed under this eulogy. "I think you must have had a good laugh at my visit. But laugh all you like, I intend when

## San Jacinto Tunnel Nears Completion



Completing a five-year job, hard-rock men boled through in the San Jacinto tunnel recently. Within a few months 1,000,000,000 gallons of the Colorado river will rush through this 13-mile bore daily in its haste to quench the thirst of Los Angeles and 12 other southern cities. It was one of the biggest tunneling jobs ever attempted.

I am married to understand all this business abracadabra of yours."

"I see you're still curious about our safe." Jocelyn had been staring at the shining gray box in the corner. "Has Mr. Kent given you the combination yet?"

"I haven't asked him to." Jocelyn's eyes moved from the safe and sought Miss Deal's ruddy and inexpressive face. This woman must know many of Felix's secrets.

"After all," she heard her own soft voice murmuring carelessly, "I don't believe its contents are as impressive as its outside. There's a good deal of hocus pocus, of bluff, isn't there, about these captains of finance, the big business men?"

"Not about our big business man. Mr. Kent's the genuine article. I guess there are men living in all parts of the world that would give the eyes out of their heads to see the contents of that safe, Miss Harlowe. . . . Ah!" Her face glittered, teeth and glasses. "There he is now. I hear him speaking to young Arthur."

Kent was speaking to young Arthur in a low hard tone and Arthur's own young voice lifted in reply piped such a tune of abject cringing contrition that Jocelyn's blood came to her face in sympathy.

"What do you suppose Arthur has done?" she whispered. "He forgot the scrapbasket." Jocelyn threw back her head and laughed.

Felix became aware of her presence in the inner office, cut short his tongue-lashing and hurried to greet her.

"Jocelyn, darling, you here?" "Yes, I tried to get you on the telephone at your apartment and then here. Miss Deal said you'd be in. I want to lunch with you."

"Splendid." "Just a moment, darling. I've two letters to dictate, and a couple of papers to sign."

"Contracts, Felix?" He did not answer. A little hard line shot up between his eyes. So, like all the people she loved, he did not like to be questioned, this king of finance, this great business man. Jocelyn withdrew to a chair near the back window and waited until he should be through. She looked idly from her window. A fire escape . . . her blood went chilly again along her arms.

Three stories below lay a neat court which opened through an archway in the next building upon a street, no thoroughfare, where vans and trucks were parked. It was an easier fire escape to climb than the one Nick had used to enter her own small bedroom window.

"Hoping that you will see matters in this light and avoid any such regrettable development as will inevitably suggest itself to you upon perusal of this letter, should you persist in your own interpretation of this incident, I remain, etc. . . . That ends it, doesn't it, Miss Becky?"

"Well, sir, there's that Brent matter."

"Oh, yes. Wait a moment." Felix rose and walked over to the safe.

Jocelyn turned from the window and watched him with a quickened action of her heart. He touched and twirled the knob quickly and deftly. She tried with all her eyes to watch and to memorize the rapid movements. Impossible of course.

Felix heard her little sharp intake of breath as the thick door swung open, and looked up at her, smiling. "Did that miracle startle you, darling?" he asked.

Inside in metal boxes, each in its compartment and all marked and labelled, lay his secrets, the fates of mines and men. She went over and stood close to Felix. He rose instantly and shut the safe.

"No you don't, Pandora! There are a million troubles in that box and not a bone among them."

He sat at his desk and busied

himself with paper for a moment. Presently he dismissed Miss Deal, looked at Jocelyn and smiled.

"Now then, let's go," he said. "Where will you lunch with me?" "Some quiet place, Felix."

On their way, in the back seat of the limousine, Jocelyn spoke quickly: "I want to marry you sooner, Felix. How soon can we arrange it?"

He sat straight, visibly excited. "Dearest—my darling—this goes through me like lightning. How soon? Today!"

"No. No. But sensibly. Will Mother agree?"

"Will she agree? Dearest, why have you changed? I love you!" "It isn't that I've changed. It's just that I've suddenly grown up. I've graduated from the convent."

"God bless you! You're the loveliest graduate I ever saw. I'm going to kiss you . . . now."

"Not here, Felix, please. People on the street—"

"Very well. I'll wait. But after lunch I'll carry you off somewhere and show you . . ."

"No, Felix, please. Let this be enough, won't you?" (Continued next week)

To some people, work is recreation; to others, it is punishment.

1902 1939

## Happy New Year



## To All Our Friends

WE WISH THE BEST OF NEW YEARS, A YEAR OVERFLOWING WITH EVERYTHING GOOD . . .

### Health, Luck and Happiness

WE APPRECIATE YOUR PAST PATRONAGE, AND WE HOPE THAT YOU MAY ALLOW US TO SHARE IN THE PLEASANT TASK OF CONTINUING TO SERVE YOU IN THE COMING YEARS.

## Wilkes Milling Co.

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# 1939

## New Year's Greetings

FROM US TO YOU

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE DURING 1938 AND PAST YEARS—AND MAY WE MERIT ITS CONTINUANCE BY CONSTANTLY IMPROVING OUR SERVICE AND ANTICIPATING YOUR NEEDS. WE VALUE YOUR FRIENDSHIP AND PATRONAGE HIGHLY, AND TAKE THIS MEANS OF EXPRESSING OUR APPRECIATION.

## Presley E. Brown

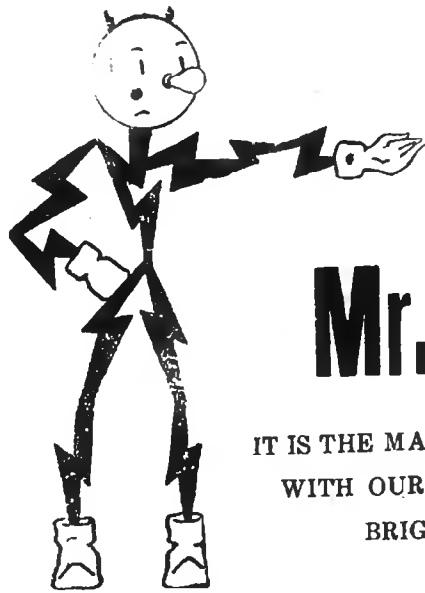
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# NEW YEAR GREETINGS

FROM YOUR ELECTRICAL SERVANT



## Mr. Reddy Kilowatt

IT IS THE MOST SINCERE WISH OF EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH OUR COMPANY THAT THE NEW YEAR 1939 BE BRIGHT FOR YOU WITH PLENTY OF . . .

## Good Luck, Good Health and Prosperity WE APPRECIATE

THE GOODWILL AND SUPPORT OF OUR MANY PATRONS DURING THE YEAR JUST CLOSING, AND WE PLEDGE OURSELVES TO NEW ENDEAVORS AND NEW AMBITIONS TO RENDER YOU AN EVEN MORE SATISFACTORY SERVICE DURING THE NEW YEAR . . . 1939.

M. G. Butner, Manager North Wilkesboro Branch

Time in . . . WSOC

9:40 A. M. Daily

# Duke

## P. O. W. E. R. C. O. M. P. A. N. Y.

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