

AWAKENED WOMAN

ELINORE BARRY

FINAL INSTALLMENT

"Roxie knew you better than I did," Neil said slowly, "I guess that's a setback for me all right . . . I was so bowled over by what you told me that day with that Ainsworth fellow that I didn't know what to believe. I began to think I just imagined I'd been married at all!"

Just then Joyce saw Roxie moving capably about the diningroom, and running to her, she flung her arms impulsively about the older woman.

"Roxie, you darling!" she cried, "Sam told me how wonderful you've been—"

Roxie beamed and flushed with pleasure. "I didn't do nothing!" she said confusedly. "But, my, it's good to have you back, Mrs. Packard, we've certainly missed you! And now do come in to dinner if you and Mr. Neil are ready."

"Where's Dickie?" she asked Neil, when they were seated, "I haven't seen him since I got back!"

"Oh, that's right—I must send for him. He's been living with Sam since you left. Moped about the house so dully that we thought he was going to cash in, poor chap. I couldn't do anything with him. He kept looking at me reproachfully, as if asking what I'd done with you. It gave me the creeps."

"Funny little Dickie!" said Joyce.

Conversation lagged. Joyce did not want to ask any questions covering the time of her absence, thinking she might turn Neil's thoughts towards his mother and cause him pain. She likewise did not want to tell him anything about her life in San Francisco during that time; it now was resuming the unreality of a bad dream, and she had no wish to revive the memories by talking about it. So she ate silently.

All at once she was aware that Neil was regarding her thoughtfully with a brooding stare unlike the matter-of-factness she remembered in him.

"Anything wrong, Neil?" she asked nervously.

"No, dear, I was just thinking how wonderful it was to have you back."

"Oh, Neil, you mustn't say things like that to me! I know it's only your kindness, your natural sweetness—" Joyce's voice choked up, and she left the table. Neil followed her into the living-room.

"Well, we won't go into that just now, Frills, if it bores you." Joyce was about to remonstrate with him for his misconstruction of her words when he went hastily on, "By the way, I found something that'll probably interest you—a diary kept by you—by Frills—beginning about the time of our arrival home in Manzanita after our marriage."

"Can I see it, Neil?"

"Sure, I'll get it, just a minute." And he went rather wearily out of the room.

Joyce was worried at the change in Neil. He seemed to have lost all his enthusiasm, all his spirit. "I hope he's not really ill," she thought miserably. "Of course his mother's death was an awful blow. Perhaps a little time . . ." Her mind was running along this course when Neil came back.

"May I look at it with you?" he asked, "I didn't read much of it. Somehow it seemed—not quite right. I thought I'd put it away and read it with you—when you came home." He spoke so quietly that Joyce barely caught the words.

"Neil," she said impulsively, pausing before she opened the book, "I do feel at home here!"

He smiled, a sudden sweet flash that warmed Joyce to the heart, and gravely they opened the diary between them.

It was nearly midnight when they laid the book aside. Fascinated, they had read every word of the bold handwriting that danced over its pages, and fascinated, they had suffered with the curious, lost spirit that had cried out her secret fears in her journal.

"Oh, Neil, it's so terrible!" cried Joyce, "I knew Frills had been a bad lot, but I never thought of her as suffering somehow—I, never thought of her as doing all these things deliberately, in a sort of crazy effort to get back her identity—to remember!"

"Yes," said Neil, "I don't know much about these things, but I should think the medicos might explain that second blow—the time you were thrown from Fire Queen—as a sort of mental snapping due to the pitch you'd worked yourself up to."

Frills' diary filled in most of the gaps in the story that Neil had gradually pieced out that day for Joyce. From the scattered notes she learned that Frills had been conscious of her loss of memory, but filled with the conviction that all at once, some day, it would come to her whom she was, where she came from—her whole place of life. "Some deep instinct," the diary said, "kept me from telling anyone. I felt that I must discover it, must work it out, for myself."

And then later, came an entry that made a very deep impression on Joyce. "I know I did wrong to marry Neil Packard without telling him. He's too good a man to be treated so meanly, but I just couldn't tell it. I couldn't tell him. And I had to marry him—not again in a lifetime am I likely to meet a man so surely possessing that which can be depended on. In this crazy world it's something to know that loyalty of that sort can be secured!"

As the diary went on, the entries became more and more excited. "I'm cheating Neil!" Frills cried. He's got a right to a wife who's more than just a unit existing for the time being! I've got to get back my memory! Perhaps drink will do it. Bring on the wine cups—I'll try 'em!"

" . . . Why do I take so much perverse pleasure in shocking people around here? Maybe when I get back my memory I'll find I was a smalltown school teacher, or somebody who never had a chance to express herself! Well, I'm expressing myself all right these days! All I've got to do is think of something reckless and wild, to be seized with an insane desire to do it! . . ."

And then, all at once, "Arthur Maitland—ugh, how I hate him. Why do I endure him around me? God knows! I flirt with him like a common street woman—yet I love Neil! Why do I do it? Sometimes I feel as if it's to try Neil's patience, to see how much he really will stand from me. There, seems to be no limit to his affections!"

" . . . I've gone almost the limit and it's done no good! What did I think it would do? God knows!"

Neil knows—I can see from his face that he knows there's been too much to that affair between Arthur Maitland and me. If he'd only knock me down—a blow, they say a blow will bring back one's memory. But Neil won't—he never will. I'll have to kill myself first. Perhaps that horse, that surly brute Fire Queen. But I have a charmed life—a charmed and a damned one! How is this thing going to end?"

And the last entry in the book, in sprawling, blotched characters: "I've been rotten over that baby of Sylvia's. Of course Neil wants it brought on here. But a child—why should I wreck a poor child's life as I'm wrecking Neil's? It's better off where it is—I'm a lost soul now."

"Neil," said Joyce at last, "Neil, doesn't it help to know that Frills did care about you? She did love you."

Neil did not reply to her question and Joyce saw that he was trembling like a leaf. "Do you think—do you think, Joyce, that things might come out as mother hoped they would? Do you think that you could feel that this was home? I shan't bother you much myself, but we might bring on Lawton's child and do our best with it between us."

"Oh, Neil, I feel as Frills said, that in this crazy world it's something to know that loyalty like yours exists! . . . Do you want me

now, knowing all this? It's been a sorry business, and it seems to me you've been the victim!"

"No victim about it," he said shortly, "I mean—I do want you—if, well—what about this Ainsworth?"

"Ainsworth—Robert Ainsworth!" Joyce suddenly had an idea. "Neil," she said, "I think I see now what Robert Ainsworth felt that day! I think he must have felt ashamed of his part in the whole affair—I think he must have seen it all, have realized what a splendid person you were, and have felt that he simply couldn't run off with your wife!"

Neil looked at her sideways. "Sounds like the bunk to me. What on earth makes you think that?"

"Well, you see, Neil, I never saw him after that day in the woods, and you remember he behaved so queerly, rejecting me by his silence!" Joyce had to swallow hard to keep back the emotion that surged over her at the memory, but she went quickly on.

"I'd always felt so sure that he was an exalted being, somebody finer than the rest of the world, and for him to turn into—into just a cad seemed all wrong. I'd rather be able to think of him without bitterness—and I do feel sure I'm right, that he simply couldn't bring himself to take your wife away."

Neil smiled. "All right with me, darling; think anything you please, as long as you don't think of him too much!"

Joyce regarded him tenderly. "Neil," she said softly, "May I make a confession to you? I've fancied myself so superior to Frills, but I wasn't really nearly as—keen. It's taken me a terribly long time to find out what she knew all along . . . Neil, dear, you're the finest person I've ever known in my life, and I—I love you."

Mountain Park News

Remodeling work at Mountain Park Institute is advancing rapidly and under J. A. Wilson's direction. The dining hall, opened in the old administration building, is almost complete; a new kitchen is to be

one of the next steps. The boys' dormitory has been slightly remodeled and redecorated.

Altogether things are rapidly getting in line for the opening of the Institute on September 5.

Miss Lorene Shores had as her guest last week Miss Alma Lowe, of State Road.

James Lowe and Reecel Norman were in Mountain Park during the latter part of last week.

Hot weather may follow to the very banks of the river, but there it gets a ducking. The most popular roads, these days, are the ones that lead to the "ol' swimmin' hole."

Mr. Goodpatter: "You are getting on in years. You should turn your thoughts toward heaven."

Mr. Oldsmith: "On the contrary I'm thinking of getting married again."



*For steady smoking—
Camel's costlier tobaccos*

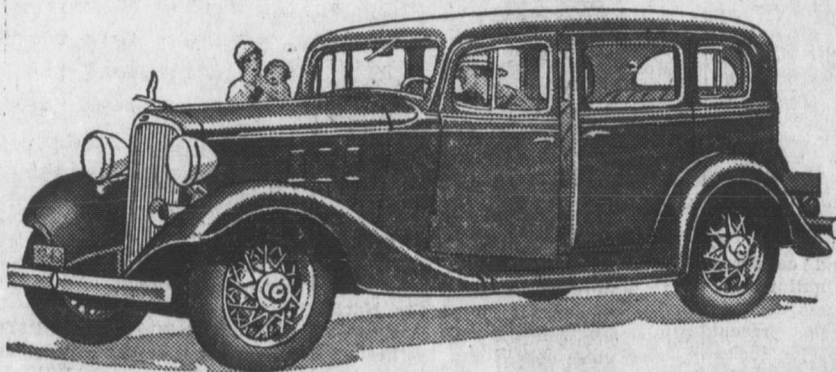
A Laxative that costs only 1¢ or less a dose

NEXT TIME you need medicine to act on the bowels, try Theford's Black-Draught. It brings quick relief and is priced within reach of all. Black-Draught is one of the least expensive laxatives that you can find. A 25-cent package contains 25 or more doses.

Refreshing relief from constipation troubles for only a cent or less a dose—that's why thousands of men and women prefer Theford's Black-Draught.

STEEL ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH!

— neither strong enough, nor safe enough, nor quiet enough for the body of a quality car like CHEVROLET



CHEVROLET There is only one type of body construction which Chevrolet will permit on the chassis of the cars it builds: That's the type which every test—and every experience—has proved to be the safest, strongest, and best. Not steel alone, because steel alone is not enough. But a Fisher body of steel reinforced by hardwood! The same kind of construction used on practically all the highest-priced cars in America.

Chevrolet well knows that steel alone has one distinct advantage: it's cheaper. Steel also is strong—up to a certain point. BUT—beyond that point, steel alone will bend and crumple under severe stress or shock. It takes the strength and supporting solidity of a hardwood reinforcement to give you the full protection and full satisfaction you want in a motor car body today.

If you're thinking of buying a new low-priced car, better watch this matter of bodies, and watch it carefully. Insist on steel reinforced by hardwood! Fortunately, the only low-priced car with this preferred type of body is also the only car with a proven valve-in-head six; with Fisher Ventilation; Cushion-Balanced Power; a Starterator. That car is Chevrolet—America's most economical automobile.

CHEVROLET MOTOR COMPANY, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

F-W CHEVROLET COMPANY

Elkin, N. C.

CHEVROLET \$445 to \$565

All prices f. o. b. Flint, Michigan. Special equipment extra. Low delivered prices and easy G. M. A. C. terms. A General Motors Value.

Renew Your Health By Purification

Any physician will tell you that "Perfect Purification of the System is Nature's Foundation of Perfect Health." Why not rid yourself of chronic ailments that are undermining your vitality? Purify your entire system by taking a thorough course of Calotabs,—once or twice a week for several weeks—and see how Nature rewards you with health.

Calotabs purify the blood by activating the liver, kidneys, stomach and bowels. In 10 cts. and 35 cts. packages. All dealers. (Adv.)

FINE REPAIRING

Two Expert Repairmen In Charge

C. W. STEELE
Jeweler

El. Main St Elkin, N. C.

INSURE

— and —
SNAP YOUR FINGERS AT MISFORTUNE

The feeling of security and contentment a policy will give you is a worthwhile investment.

Paul Gwyn
INSURANCE
ALL LINES
Security — Service
Phone 258
Elkin, N. C.