

The Dreams We Knew

Rachel Scott McDaniel

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A former couple reunites for an investigation in Rachel Scott McDaniel's dazzling romance novel *The Dreams We Knew*.

Delvina, the daughter of a mobster, was adopted by wealthy New Yorkers. In the 1920s, she becomes a flinty detective. Her ex-husband, Kent, is a debonair detective who harbors secrets about his origins. Despite having parted on painful terms, Delvina and Kent are mutually snared in a fashion model's murder case.

Alternating between details of the crime and the story of how Delvina and Kent met, the novel reveals the onetime couple's lingering feelings for each other. Delvina, from Kent's perspective, is bold, capable, and unconcerned by the trappings of high society, but she's vulnerable too. She, in turn, admires him, though she bristles over his unexplained departure from her life and his tendency to deflect deeper conversations with repartee.

Delvina and Kent's exchanges crackle with unspoken desires that heighten as the dangers increase. Suspense builds around their relationship. When an unexpected revelation forces them even closer together, they volley between playfulness and caution, long-overdue candor and gradual passion.

Art Deco details, speakeasy settings, and gritty city warehouses flesh out the book's background. The investigation is helped along by Kent and Delvina's connections and the occasional tip-offs they receive. They contend with red herrings, a knife injury, precarious situations, and a brush with a crime boss. All the while, their sleuthing progresses alongside Kent's confessions about his past; the couple's unresolved pain is soothed with their fresh convictions about the value in choosing love.

In the Prohibition-era novel *The Dreams We Knew*, a couple regains trust in each other through their shared perils.

KAREN RIGBY (January / February 2025)

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