

SANDY

A NEW STORY OF A MODERN GIRL

by Elenore Meherin,
AUTHOR OF "CHICKIE"

THE STORY SO FAR
Sandy McNeil wed Ben Murillo, a foreigner with large wealth, to please her parents. She left him, an old sweetheart, in the garden of her home in Santa Barbara. She tells of her life as a San Joaquin country girl finds her there, that she cannot go with Murillo. But she can't stay with him either. At Lake Tahoe she meets two Santa Barbara boy friends, who invite the couple to a house dance. Murillo's mother is in their room. Angered by this, and other indignities, Sandy flees her home and goes to San Francisco, taking her there and plans to take forceful possession of her. Sandy vows she will not return.

GO ON WITH THE STORY FROM HERE

CHAPTER 14

OH, so that's it! You think you can do that?"

"Hush! Come back here, Sandy!"

Sandy trembled. "It's no use, mother. I won't live and be his wife! That's all there's to it! I'm not going to be trapped into it!"

"No one is going to trap you, your husband least of anyone!" The color splashed over Mrs. McNeil's face. She had held of Sandy's arm. Now she sat down, breathless and flustered. What in the world was the matter with Sandy? Such talk! Did she want the whole of Santa Barbara to be scandalized? Did she want the Morning Press to publish the runaway? Of course Mr. Murillo must stay here. They must think of the family—both families. Sandy had no right to put herself before everyone else.

Mrs. McNeil was now crying. "I little thought, Sandy, when I saw you so beautiful as a bride, you'd come back to me like this!"

"I shouldn't have come. I see that now. I should have gone some-

where else. Anywhere!"

"Don't talk like that, Sandy. I was so proud of you. I thought you were going to be so happy. You'd have everything. You haven't even tried to keep the holy promises you made."

"I did try. I tried for two months."

"Your mother and many thousands of good women try for thirty years and keep on trying. I didn't think a child of mine, you least of any, Sandy, would be so cowardly."

"How do you figure that?" Sandy faltered. "I'm not a coward! I'm not a quitter! I can meet most things. You don't know—you can't know—I hate him. Oh, Lord God, I hate him!"

"Sandy! Your husband! You married him."

"I never dreamed I could feel like this! I didn't need to feel like this! He could have—oh, if he'd only been here—ever half way decent! He was thought of me—one—what I wanted—oh, that didn't count!"

"Men are all alike."

"You can't tell me that—oh, no, they're not all like Ben Murillo!"

"Hush—hush, Sandy. Do you want him to hear—you're married to him. Nothing can change that."

ES—Sandy was married to him. The marriage was for life. When God had joined together no man could put asunder. All this and a great deal more. Isabel McNeil told her daughter again and again. In the morning

when Sandy helped her make the beds, she spoke of it. In the afternoon when Sandy stole into the back yard and sat with the big white cat in her arms, her mother followed. Did Sandy feel better today? Wasn't it really kind in Ben to bring those squares for dinner and those wonderful roses. Didn't she appreciate this?

Didn't she appreciate all the surprises her husband was preparing? Mrs. McNeil waited after this question.

Sandy rubbed the cat's head until she purred, settling as if for a quiet sleep.

"You don't ask me what surprises? You don't want to hear about the house he has bought? The way he has remodeled it?"

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THE strain in the house became acute. Murillo rose late in the morning. Alice was forced to wait in the kitchen—prepare a fresh breakfast—be sure that the tablecloth was unspotted, the cream thick and the bacon very crisp. She grumbled about it. The Lord knew she had plenty to do without a permanent guest in the house. She wasn't Ben Murillo's wife. She'd like to know why she had to be the goat.

And at dinner when Murillo was present, Angus McNeil talked blithely. He poked fun at Sandy in a crude way; asked her if she wasn't getting over her spell of bridylitis. Once, her face crimson, she ran from the table. She threatened to leave the house—let the world find out about it—they would pretty soon, anyhow!

But she had to keep up appearances. She had to attend the dinners for her married sisters given for her on the return of Beatrice Murillo. These dinners brought other engagements. Everywhere Sandy was treated as the joyous bride.

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SHE was waiting for the letter from Judith. Then she found out that Judith was away—she was winning. Sometimes Sandy said, "Oh, leave God out of it! Maybe He can understand!"

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