

"SIE SAB-SISTER"

A STORY OF MYSTERY, SUSPENSE AND LOVE

By CLIFFORD WEBB AND ROSE ELO

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WHAT HAS HAPPENED
DIANA BROOKS, beautiful daughter of the editor of the Catawba City Times, and a chain of nine other newspapers, had a boy friend, Tedden, and her father is engaged in a persistent fight against the corrupt administration of Captain Tedden. Diana's father, editor of the Times, rebukes his scathing attacks on politicians on the ring and stage.

A few days later Brooks himself disappears. In an attempt to locate him, TEDDEN KEEFELL, his ward and son of Tedden, and Diana's friend, for hours, Tedden saves Don's life and out of gratitude he asks her to marry him.

Tedden refuses, knowing that he does not really love her.

NOW READ ON:

CHAPTER XXI

The clubhouse, she figured, was not more than half a mile distant at the most. She did not, however, remain on the highway but ran along the fields keeping a parallel course with the road. The moist earth of the freshly ploughed acre sank under her feet. She lost one of her pumps, stumbled, almost fell, but fought forward through the darkness, desperately.

Her tulle frock was a shredded wreck by the time she glimpsed the lights of the clubhouse. The rear of the building apparently was deserted. Diana found a telephone in the butler's pantry. She gasped with relief as she heard a voice tell her to "hold th' wire. Mr. Keene has just come home!"

Then at last, it came: "Donald Keene speaking."

"Oh, Don—this is Diana! Walden got—nasty... I'm at the club house... Dress torn... I'm a sight... Can you come out?"

"I'll be out right away!" Don shouted back. "Where are you?"

"In th' rear—come to th' back door. I'll be waiting there. I mustn't let any of the crowd see me in this shape. Hurry, Don!"

The girl's lips were parched with the fever of drink and excitement. Her cheeks, in which the color customarily glowed, were drawn and bloodless. She stepped softly about looking for water. At the kitchen sink she bathed her hot face and drank avidly of the cold water from the tap.

Drawing back into the shadow of the rear vestibule she waited for Don. A guarded footfall came to her ear. She peered toward the pantry. Walden! He had followed her.

She cringed further into the darkness, hardly daring to breathe. She was in no immediate danger of discovery, but in the ballroom a few stragglers were still dancing, and she wanted to avoid the disgrace of a public altercation with Walden.

He seemed fired with a demon-facial purpose. After searching for awhile she heard him moving away toward the front of the building.

The wait for Don seemed endless. Fully twenty minutes must have passed before she heard the welcome sound of grinding brakes. In another moment footsteps crunched on the gravelled walk and she saw Don vaguely outlined beyond the screen door, barely a yard from her. She emerged and addressed him in a whisper.

"Don, I'm coming right out!"

He held the screen door open. Just as they descended the steps another figure sprang out from around the corner. It was Walden.

"She goes home with me!" He swore, and lurched toward them grasping Diana's arm.

"No, she doesn't, Walden," re-

turned Don evenly. Then: "What is he in th' matter with you, man?" and he jerked the other aside roughly.

Walden struck out, the blow landed on Don's cheek, and hurt. Don returned the blow. The two men grappled.

Diana was panic-stricken, but still avoided an outcry. Walden was landing two blows to Don's one. He outweighed his adversary by fully forty pounds and the other was weak from his recent illness. Don, very apparently was fighting a losing battle.

Diana groped about for a weapon of some kind. She could find nothing. Then she remembered seeing a mop in the butler's pantry. She darted inside, snatched up the utensil and flew back to lend Don a helping hand. And a helping hand was what Don was needing at that moment.

The darkness made it difficult for her to distinguish between the two men until she heard a curse. For just an instant the two separated and she made out the form of her enemy.

The girl grasped the handle of her weapon with both hands. She raised it high and then with all her strength brought the soggy thing smashing down on Walden's head.

Fascinated she stared for an instant at the still form lying at her feet, terror-stricken at what she had done. Then she turned to the friend who had come to her rescue. Don, too, was looking down at his fallen adversary.

"My God, Diana!" he gasped. "I hope you haven't—"

But she evidently hadn't, for at that instant the man on the ground emitted another grunt, rolled over and then sat up. His gaze fell on the girl standing a few feet away. "Well," he articulated with slow deliberation. "I'll be—damned! Huh!"

With that he climbed awkwardly to his feet, swayed for a second or so and then lurched off without another word or look at his erstwhile opponents.

The girl turned to her companion. "C'mon, Don," she gulped, holding out her hand, "let's go!"

By the time Walden had reached his car standing at the side of the road the two were speeding safely on their way toward home.

"I've been a fool, Don," she told him. She was like a penitent child.

"I realize now," she went on sadly, "that I behaved very badly to-night. You might say that Walden was partly justified in his beatfulness. Th' whole thing is wretchedly disgraceful. I'm so ashamed." She was sobbing.

Don tried to soothe her.

"You didn't do anything so awfully wrong," he assured her gently. "I didn't dream Walden was such a cad. Don't worry."

She stole a look at him. He was looking at her with a bantering smile, attempting to efface her remorse with small talk.

Diana listened, pondering at the

same time the difference in men. Don would not have taken advantage of her abandoned performance. How fortunate Lola was to have won the love of a man like him.

The rose-tinted fingers of dawn were just touching the horizon as they approached the Brooks' place. The first streaks of day replaced the arc lights of the street. The latter were extinguished as the two drew up before Diana's home. A milkman clattered past them.

He had not planned to do this thing, Impulse ruled him. Why, hang it all, it was for that, virtually—what he had done—that Diana had jumped from Walden's car—she had refused to ride with him.

He bent over and pressed his lips almost roughly on hers.

Diana gasped. Don heard a brief, throaty laugh and the next moment he was alone. He turned and walked meditatively out to his car.

The rosy dawn had lengthened into the golden promise of day when he let himself into the house with his latch-key. He fell asleep immediately... Diana, huntress and pale goddess of the moon, sought his favor.... Helen of Troy, who seemed too personified by Lola Mantell, visited him in his subconscious fancy. He, Donald Keene, was some

kind of a god and Helen of Troy was intriguing to betray him.

He chuckled over this dream as he was taking his shower bath a few hours later.

"That makes me a little tin god—a devil with th' ladies!" he told his mother with a laugh after he had described his dream to her at breakfast.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Walden's sinister purpose begins to reveal itself in tomorrow's chapter.

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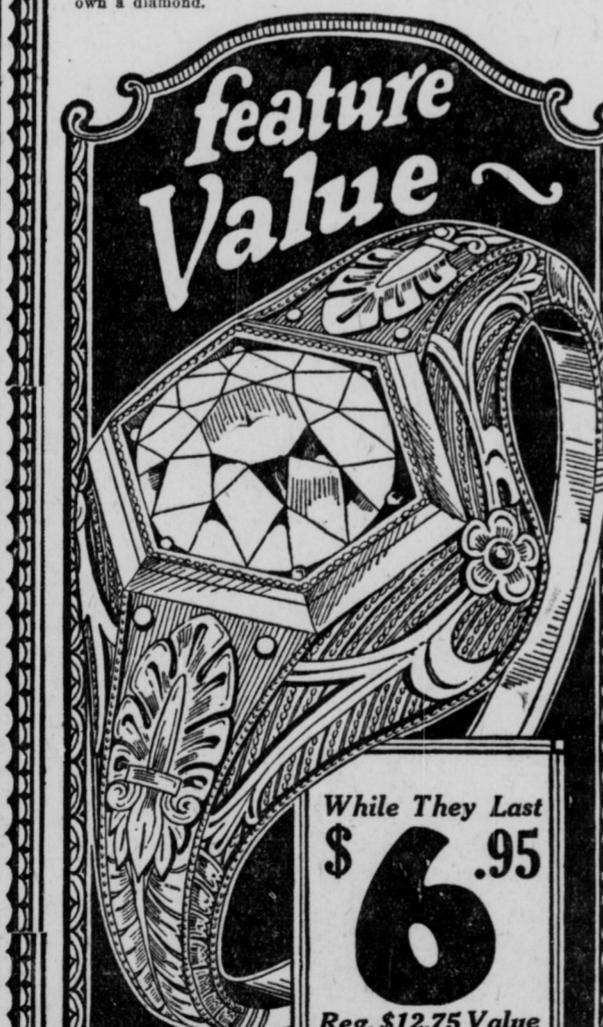
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