

SIX KNOX

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649354160

Six Knox by Henry Dessauer

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HENRY DESSAUER

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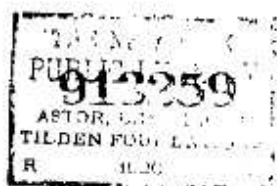
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SIX KNOX

BY
HENRY DESSAUER



THE NEALE PUBLISHING COMPANY
440 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
MCMXIX
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2-11-18

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY
 Jan. 19, 20

SIX KNOX

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY

HIS LITERARY EXECUTOR

Late in the afternoon of April 1, 1917, New York was shocked by a tragic occurrence, in which Sixtus Knox, among others, met with an untimely death.

The elevated train, with at least one hundred and fifty passengers in each car, was racing northward. My friend Six, one of the last of the great crowd to board the train, having secured no space whereon to stand, hung outside, holding on to a pole with his two hands, his thin legs swinging like a flag in the breeze, when,—the motive has never been ascertained,—a bloodthirsty Neapolitan shot him through the breast with a revolver.

Was it a case of mistaken identity, or a vendetta act of the Black Hand? Nobody ever knew. Unaccustomed to a bullet within his ribs, poor

Six, in the midst of his flight, let go and fell down like an ordinary aeroplane.

They do things better in the West. There in a semi-private drinking place,—or so-called “Blind Tiger,”—this notice is put up:

PLEASE DO NOT SHOOT THE MAN AT THE PIANO. HE IS DOING
HIS BEST.

No such kindly warning as “Don’t Shoot” was to be seen in New York on the platform of the car, and my friend Six paid with his life for the criminal negligence of the company. From the train Six fell on the ramshackle line, from there crashed through to the untender part of Tenderloin Broadway, and landed on a lady with an infant in her arm, killing both,—and of course himself,—besides making a gruesome mess on the pavement. In the meantime the Italian murderer committed suicide in the car. The bullet went not only into his brains, but took effect also in the eye of a fellow-passenger. The police searched diligently, but nothing was found,—the eye was lost.

Six left a widow, two children, little money, and some huge folios descriptive of his extensive travels, which had carried him from Kashmir to Kalamazoo, from Assuan to Berditchev.

The widow claimed \$150,000 from the railroad company, for the loss of a valuable and talented husband. In course of the suit, some of his writings were read in court, in order to convince jury and judge what a precious asset to humanity in general and to his wife and children in particular Sixtus Knox had been during his lifetime. After short deliberation the jury awarded the Widow Knox nothing for the value of the husband, but \$3000—for his talents.

One week after having received the compensation Mrs. Knox married again, and was in such a happy frame of mind (her connubial bliss intensified by the ardent attentions of her second life-partner) that she did not wish to be reminded of her unlucky first. As I was Six's closest friend, she gave me all his papers, and told me that I could make such use of them as I thought fit.

For a long while I did not know how to act. As the stingy grocer offered only a quarter of a cent a pound for old paper, I decided to go to a publisher to have the first part of Sixtus Knox's adventures brought out,—his "Experiences in Maryville,"—which I herewith present to an indulgent circle of readers. Whether his exploits in other climes will ever see the light