



## **Diana Christmas: Blackmail, Death and a British Film Star**

*F.R. Jameson*

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# Diana Christmas: Blackmail, Death and a British Film Star

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## **Diana Christmas: Blackmail, Death and a British Film Star** F.R. Jameson

In 1959, Diana Christmas – the beautiful, vivacious redhead – was a major star in Britain. It was her moment. She was on the cusp of making it big in Hollywood. Then, she simply walked away from the limelight. Vanished from an industry that adored her.

Twenty years later, Michael, a young film journalist, arrives at her suburban home and discovers the still vibrant and alluring Diana. Between her sheets, he hears for the first time the reason for her disappearance – a tale of coercion, shame and blackmail.

To his shock, he learns that those who destroyed her career and ruined her life still have their claws in her.

Totally smitten, he promises to help her. But Michael soon finds that the past doesn't let go easily...

Diana Christmas – A new thriller of desire and betrayal from F.R. Jameson.

## **Diana Christmas: Blackmail, Death and a British Film Star Details**

Date : Published March 21st 2018

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Author : F.R. Jameson

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# **From Reader Review Diana Christmas: Blackmail, Death and a British Film Star for online ebook**

## **Claire Davis says**

I received Diana Christmas by F. R. Jameson in exchange for an honest review. I have given this noir thriller four out of five stars ???????? Sometimes books can take a little while for me to fully engage into, however this was an entirely different matter for Diana Christmas. From the very first chapter I was sold. The descriptions and detail that Jameson used throughout this book made it very difficult for me to put it down. The descriptive writing really helped to picture the world Diana and Michael lived through in my imagination. Although I, personally, couldn't connect with the types of characters within this book, I found that the characters created by Jameson were unique and well-developed, as at times throughout the story it made me feel quite disgusted by some of the actions made by certain characters which shows that the author has done an incredible job at making the reader feel such hatred towards them through writing. At times, you could find me reading with my mouth slightly open as there were a lot of twists throughout this story that I did not see coming which had me on tenterhooks! I can't wait to read the second book in the 'Silver Screen Noir' series called Eden St. Michel which is going to be out later on this summer! I would definitely recommend this book to fans of noir, thriller, crime and mystery.

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## **Tess Olson says**

I won this Kindle ebook from Goodreads Giveaways.

This is a thriller noir reminiscent of Hammett and Chandler. This melodrama includes the character types of private eye (journalist in this case) and femme fatale, following the typical plot of easily duped man falls for crazy hysterical woman. The author weaves seduction, blackmail, and cruelty throughout the story. If you are a fan of noir, the twists and turns are classic. A quick read.

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## **Karen says**

A story of a once young actress who after a party leaves the film industry. Now jump ahead twenty years. She is still has fans who want to know what she is up to and why she left, but will her story ever get published? A young reporter who has been a fan of Diana's for years is assigned to interview her, only their meeting doesn't go as planned and their "relationship" will drag them both through a lot of tough times and trouble.

I enjoyed this story and found it reminiscent of some of the movies I watched as a young girl. A majority of this story takes place in the 1980's and there is a lot of names dropped of actors from Diana's time in the movies. The story is well written and there were a lot of twists throughout the book. The characters are very well written and rounded. The characters go through a lot of emotions and tough times. I liked the ending, but I wished that it had given a final decision by Michael.

I give this story a 4 star review and recommend it to anyone who likes noir, crime, or Hollywood biographies. I think that you will find it to keep distracted from what is going on around you and draw you

into a different time a place.

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## **Jen says**

An aging yet still stunningly beautiful former British star walked away from potential Hollywood fame and the reason for her disappearance is uncovered years later by a young journalist in *Diana Christmas* by F.R. Jameson.

To read this, and other book reviews, visit my website: <http://makinggoodstories.wordpress.com/>.

A young film journalist, Michael Mallory, is tasked with interviewing Diana Christmas, of whom he's a fan, twenty years after the height of her fame. After arriving at her suburban home, Michael finds himself in a more intimate situation than he ever anticipated. As told to him from between the sheets of her bed, Michael learns about the blackmail that prevented Diana from pursuing a Hollywood career. After learning that those who've been coercing her still have the means to do so, Michael, in his enamored state, is determined to help Diana escape their clutches - but he doesn't know how deeply this goes or how much he needs to do.

A quick, intriguing read using familiar tropes and characters of the noir genre, this story contains obsession, seduction, and viciousness to captivate and entertain. The story weaves together elements of the glamour, corruption, and power in an industry rife with the necessity of having the right connections, and the writing evokes a visceral sense of the desperation and need that befalls some of the players. While an idealistic character, Michael exhibits some fantastical naiveté with respect to his perception of his relationship with Diana, which I found to be beyond the realm permitted through suspension of disbelief - he's a journalist, so he should have some critical thought and skepticism about someone's motivations for their behavior despite the desire clouding his head.

Overall, I'd give it a 3.5 out of 5 stars.

\*I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Todd Simpson says**

This is a fabulous story. Full of great characters, and a plot that I really enjoyed. I like a story that can keep me guessing, and F.R. Jameson has certainly achieved this for me, especially with some of the unexpected surprises, which I loved. Michael Mallory is a very easy character to like, and he's one of the standouts in this book.

Michael Mallory was quite excited about interviewing a movie star he quite admired. Working for *Classic Cinema Monthly* gave him the opportunity to interview the beautiful Diana Christmas. He was blown away that so many years later after finishing her movie career, she was still a stunning woman. Of course, he never thought in a million years that he would become romantically involved with her. He didn't consider himself anything special, and definitely not a lady's man. Diana has a secret which she has kept from the general public, and she would love Michael to help her out. Even though he hadn't spent very long with Diana, he jumped at the chance to help her. However, he had no idea how dangerous this little task was going to be. This is a thoroughly entertaining novel, and well worth a read. 5/5 Star Rating.

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## **Ramona says**

I would like to thank Goodreads, Kindle, and Goodreads for a good read. It took me awhile to become engaged with this novel because I felt no sympathy with the characters. It is dark little novel but I did finish it and the story was interesting

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## **Dan Schwent says**

When young Michael Mallory is tasked with writing an article about forgotten siren Diana Christmas, he quickly falls under her spell. Diana tells him she's being blackmailed and Michael goes to settle tings and quickly winds up in way over his head...

I've been friends with F.R. Jameson here on Goodreads for years. When he hit me up to review an ARC of Diana Christmas, I took him up on it. I was hooked form the first page.

Taking a page out of the early Megan Abbott playbook, James weaves the tale of Diana Christmas, a screen goddess that faded into obscurity, and Michael Mallory, the twenty-two year old that she gets her hooks into. Logically, I thought Michael was an idiot for a lot of the book. As a red-blooded male, I understood why he did what he did, logical or not.

It started off simply enough: confront a blackmailer and get him to stop. Things got a little more complicated after that, mostly due to the fact that Diana Christmas was, in fact, crazier than a shit house rat. Things go off the rails in a big way, as expected in stories of this type. Knowing it's Michael telling the story doesn't kill the tension. He gets seven shades of shit beat out of him before the end. Speaking of the ending, it hit me like a truck.

F. R. James crafted a good hard-boiled tale with Diana Christmas. Four out of five stars.

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## **Jolie says**

Thriller Noir is a newer genre for me to read and review. While I have heard of it, I have seen thriller noir films and I was intrigued by a book form of the movies I have seen. I was glad that I accepted to request to review Diana Christmas. This book was an homage to the black and white thriller noir films that I watched as a child/teen.

Diana Christmas was a vivacious redhead who was about to make it big in the late 50's Hollywood when she walked away from it all. She vanished. 20 years later, in the late 70's, Michael tracks her down. An aspiring film journalist, he is thrilled at the chance to meet and interview Diana. He did not expect to end up in bed with her. He also did not expect for her to reveal the true reasons why she walked away from it all or that she is still being blackmailed. Michael, believing he is in love, decides to take it upon himself to help Diana get her blackmailers off her back. But Diana Christmas is not what she seems.

Michael was one of the most naïve characters that I have read to date. I liked him but I wanted to shake some sense into him. He put himself into situations that made me mentally shake my head and go “Why would you do that“. Don’t even get me started on his relationship with Diana. That relationship was doomed from the start. He fell in love with her too quickly and she, well, she was not a very nice person to him. Actually, that is an understatement. She cost him everything.

I didn’t like Diana from the minute she was introduced in the book. She saw that Michael was this naïve young man who actually knew who she was and decided to use him. I went from not liking her to hating her in the middle of the book. What she put Michael through was despicable. I was happy when she got what was coming to her at the end of the book. She deserved everything that happened to her.

The ending of Diana Christmas wasn’t a happy one. It was genius of the author to end the book in that way. It was full of regret, self-loathing and a slight undercurrent of bitterness. Which was a perfect ending for this book.

What I liked about Diana Christmas:

A) It was a new genre for me to read

B) Michael

C) The ending. Refreshing to read a book where everything wasn’t ended happily

What I disliked about Diana Christmas:

A) Diana.

B) Michael (yes, I liked and disliked him)

C) Almost too fast-moving for a book

I would give Diana Christmas an Adult rating. There is sex. There is language. There is violence. I would recommend that no one under the age of 21 read this book.

I would recommend Diana Christmas to family and friends. I would also reread this book.

I would like to thank the author for allowing me to read and review Diana Christmas.

All opinions stated in this review of Diana Christmas are mine.

\*\*I received a free copy of this book and volunteered to review it\*\*

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**F.R. says**

*Do you want a brand-new noir thriller? One crammed full of unexpected twists and turns?*

*What happened to the glamorous film-star who disappeared? What sordid secrets derailed her life?*

*My new novel, DIANA CHRISTMAS, is published today and is available - at the moment - for the bargain price of £1.99/\$1.99, and on Kindle Unlimited. [Click here to get your copy now!](#)*

## **DIANA CHRISTMAS - What next?**

DIANA CHRISTMAS is its own self-contained story. It has a beginning, a middle and an end.

I promise I won't ever irritate my readers by leaving a novel on a 'duh-duh-duuuuh' cliff-hanger.

However, even though it has an ending. I have included a big clue for what I'm doing next.

In the opening chapters (indeed so close to the start of the book, it's in one of the chapters currently on Instafreebie) there's a passing reference – amidst real actors and actresses who actually plied their trade in the British film industry – to a one-time film star named, Eden St. Michel and the scandal which engulfed her.

Now seems as perfect a time as any to announce that EDEN ST. MICHEL will be my next novel. The second in my 'Screen Siren Noir' series.

It's a different story to DIANA CHRISTMAS, but it's most definitely in the same world and shares a great number of the same themes. I think if you enjoy DIANA CHRISTMAS, then you'll definitely enjoy EDEN St. MICHEL too.

It will be out later this summer and I will of course keep you, the lovely readers of this blog, posted.

For now though, DIANA CHRISTMAS is published in two days' time and I hope that you're getting as excited about it as I am. It's a novel I am immensely proud of, the best piece of work I've ever done, and I can't wait for people to have the chance to read it.

Do you like sharp edged noir thrillers with lots of unexpected twists and turns? Do you want to hear what happened to the glamorous film star who disappeared? Find out the hidden secrets which derailed her life?

Intrigued?

Then DIANA CHRISTMAS could be the book for you!

## **Why Diana Christmas changes everything for me**

DIANA CHRISTMAS wasn't meant to be a novel.

It was meant to be a long short story, a novella. It was a challenge I made to myself last August: to write and have out a new novella by Christmas.

My attempt, valiant though it was, failed when I realised I just had too much story and too many ideas – there were too many themes to explore – for it to be anything other than a novel. Not the longest novel in the world, admittedly, but a novel nonetheless.

The reason I originally saw it as a shorter work was that it wasn't quite on brand. I've always seen myself as an author of supernatural thrillers. It felt that my calling was writing tense scary stories where things don't only go bump on the wooden floorboards, they rip off the protagonist's toes.

But none of that describes DIANA CHRISTMAS. This book is a straight noir thriller with nothing eerie or uncanny at all.

And now that it's about to be published, I find it's a book and a world, which refuses to let go of me.

Not only did DIANA CHRISTMAS grow, but I realised – as I finished it – that there was more than one book there. Even before I got to the final full stop, I was already missing her world and knew there had to be a follow-up.

In fact, I started writing the follow-up nearly straight away. The third book is also making great progress in my notepads, and I have a cracking idea for the fourth.

Suddenly the kind of books I write has taken a real shift. And I'm absolutely fine with that.

I am no longer exclusively an author of supernatural thrillers which border the edge of horror, I now also write straight thrillers about strong, but wronged, glamorous women.

And maybe this will confuse someone who delves casually into my work, wondering how the one thing relates to the other (or maybe I'm underestimating how connected all my books are, no matter where they might fall on the supernatural spectrum). Perhaps there will be one group of people who like one set of books and another group which prefers the other.

I honestly don't know how it will play out or how my writing career will progress now that I've diversified. All I can say is that I'm really happy with how DIANA CHRISTMAS has turned out. No doubt that's easy to see as I'm still so inspired by it. And hopefully I can persuade people who've read my previous stuff to read it, even though nothing goes bump in the night (or takes anyone's toes off).

Once upon a time, I read a piece about Philip Roth, who asked if he didn't write his books, who would? And that's how I feel about DIANA CHRISTMAS. It's a damn good book which has roared its way into existence, and – despite the fact it's a departure for me - it's a book only I could have written and I'm immensely proud of it.

### **Who is Diana Christmas?**

Good question.

Who is she and why does she have a whole book named after her?

Back in the 1950s, Diana Christmas was a really big star in British films. A gorgeous, vivacious, red-headed star; Britain's answer to Rita Hayworth.

Undeniably she was glamorous, undeniably she was sexy, but she was funny as well. Few actresses working anywhere had as expert comic timing as Diana Christmas. She could deliver a line – even one not



particularly funny – and do it so perfectly she'd make an audience guffaw. There was just a way she could raise her eyebrow when confronted by some piece of idiocy or nonsense, that just had them rolling in the aisles.

As her career progressed, she moved more and more into comedies and light fayre, but at the beginning of her career she was the young and beautiful damsel in a number of dramas. However, she was never quite an ingenue. There was always something too knowing in her on-screen demeanour for her to be cast as the pure snow white innocent. She was too obviously sexy for that.

Her screen debut was in *THE LAST ROGUE*, when she was seventeen years old, when her whole part was to make Dirk Bogarde feel uncomfortable. She's one of a trio of girls who tempts him, but it's the kiss she blows to him – from her full and plump lips – which seems to make the sweat burst onto his brow. It's a great first performance, and one that announces a vivacious presence whose sensuality seems to dominate the screen.

The parts got bigger, she proved herself in drama and comedy and found herself on the cusp of Hollywood stardom.

Bob Hope came to London to make a Technicolor comedy called *THE LONG LOST LORD BUTTONS*, where she's his love interest-cum-foil. Absolutely she looks fabulous, rarely had she ever looked sexier than in the low-cut green dress she wore in the race course scene. It was her first colour film and no one's red hair had ever been as captured as beautifully as hers was.

What's more she's brilliant in it.

Obviously, Bob Hope's many scriptwriters make sure he had virtually all the funny lines, but she more than holds her own. Giving alternatively askance and knowing looks which are just hilarious, while wringing all the laughs she can get from every good line she's given.

The film isn't great, but she is magnificent in it. It should have led to great things, it should have led to her being a star in Hollywood.

Billy Wilder wanted her for his next film, Hitchcock was allegedly talking to her for a serious role.

But instead she just disappeared.

From being a big star ready to take the mantle of international fame, she suddenly stopped appearing in films, just seemed to disappear out of the industry.

No one knew what had happened to Diana Christmas, that is until a young film journalist knocked her door one December morning in 1979 for an interview...

### **Why I had to write Diana Christmas**

It started when I was young: when I was a slightly out of step little boy in South Wales with a Bogart fixation and a love of old films.

A craving for noir and femmes fatales that I cemented by my reading, then re-reading and re-reading again of all Raymond Chandler's novels. (Well, I only read *PLAYBACK* the once, but it would be the rare person who read that numerous times.) In addition I read Dashiell Hammet, Jim Thompson and James Cain, but Chandler was the one I always returned to.

As I grew up I discovered James Ellroy and Megan Abbott, and their brand of Hollywood stories. Then there was a period when I read showbiz biography after showbiz biography – Orson Welles, Cary Grant, Marlene Dietrich, Billy Wilder, Lana Turner, Alfred Hitchcock – and loved them all. I loved the prying back of the glamour and finding something sadder and more commonplace underneath. Or, in the case of the Hollywood novels, finding something sordid and scandalous underneath.

In recent years I have got heavily into Karina Longworth's superb *YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS* podcast, which is factual, but has given me some incredible stories I have mostly never heard before.

And yes, before you ask, I greatly enjoyed *FEUD*.

So, I've always had a love for tales of salaciousness behind the Hollywood glamour, but the problem I had with writing such a story myself was that I'm not American; I've only been to Los Angeles once and not for a long enough period that I can remotely say I know it. It's not my city, it's not my world and for me to try and insert myself into that milieu as a resident of south-west London, would just expose my ignorance.

But there was of course a British film industry.

Shabbier and more provincial, it was nevertheless a place I could write my stories, in the city which is now my home. The kind of tales to capture my love of Raymond Chandler, Megan Abbott and Jim Thompson, but in a British setting. To take all this showbiz nonsense that's been bubbling away in my head for the last thirty years, marry it to my darker ideas and create a story which is part of a smaller and more parochial film industry, but is still suffused with glamour nonetheless.

Thus, my 'Silver Screen Noir' series.

And the first novel, *DIANA CHRISTMAS*.

A book infused with my youthful passions, and exactly the kind of tense and unpredictable tale I've always wanted to tell. Right now it feels like I've been waiting my whole life to write this novel; it's a culmination of so many things that have been going around in my head for years...

*An excerpt from DIANA CHRISTMAS (the first three chapters!) is available on Instafreebie now. It's a book I'm really proud of – the first in my 'Screen Siren Noir' series – and can't wait for people to read. I'll have a lot more about the writing of this book in the coming weeks, but if you'd like to make a start on actually reading it, just [click here](#).*

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**Marissa says**

Goodreads Kindle Copy Win

It deals with a movie star disappearance in 1959 Hollywood. We learn what really happened to her decades later when a film journalist finds her in a house.

It is an interesting tale told through both their eyes.

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### **Pattyh says**

Diana Christmas written by F.R. Jameson could be a movie on TCM...This new book takes the reader into a time that most of us don't remember - it is gritty but vivid, sullen but snappy, and most of all just a good old fashioned mystery.

A young journalist, Michael, is determined to find out what happened to a long forgotten screen star, Diana, who walked away from her career in the late 1950's. He is taken in by her beauty and instantly wants to help her get back at those that hurt her so long ago. But Michael is in for a surprise, because Diana is not what she appears to be...no, and things are not what they seem.

Good read - I read it in one sitting. I liked it and it is part of a series - this is book one - so more to come. Recommend.

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### **Jane Blanchard says**

Diana Christmas by F. R. Jameson is described as a thriller noir. Unfamiliar with the genre, I looked up noir fiction and learned that in this category the protagonist is not a detective, but a victim, a suspect, or a perpetrator and that the protagonist is self-destructive and victimized by a corrupt system. In this story, Diana Christmas is a forgotten screen star from the 1950's who is interviewed by Michael, a film journalist. Enrapt by her beauty and woeful story, Michael becomes entangled in a web of deceit, lies, murder.

The best part of the story is Michael's narration so beautifully crafted that it felt as if he were telling me the story as we sat having a drink somewhere. I couldn't put the book down. What more can I say? If you enjoy a suspenseful thriller I highly recommend this book. Perhaps you too will become a fan of this genre.

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### **Bill Lynas says**

In 1979 a young man interviews Diana Christmas, a once famous actress of the 1950s, & when they become lovers he learns why she turned her back on stardom at the height of her career.

As in his previous stories FR Jameson's characters come vividly to life in a highly enjoyable slice of British noir.

Just a few chapters into the story we encounter a blackmailer & when Jameson describes him & his squalid surroundings it is so unnerving that you literally shiver as you read. The references to real actors from the 1950s & 1970s add nicely to the overall effect.

The fictional characters are so well drawn that I found them genuinely unpleasant, which shows just how good the author is at creating these people. I eagerly await the author's next venture into the world of Screen Siren Noir.

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## Rebecca says

\*\*\*Review originally posted on [www.reviewsfeed.net](http://www.reviewsfeed.net)\*\*\*

This was a new genre for me to explore, and I relished the opportunity to read something new.

Michael, a recently graduated film journalist, lands himself an interview with none other than former star, Diana Christmas. Quickly finding himself between the sheets with her, he embroils himself in a history of blackmail and subterfuge spanning decades.

A forewarning to readers, some of the scenes in the book are NSFW and certainly for mature readers. I have to say that whilst I don't read anything that... pushes the boundaries, shall we say, I didn't find the raunchier parts too intimidating or uncomfortable to read. The narrative touches upon intimacy in a way that neither shies away from it uncomfortably, nor records every sordid detail, which makes for the perfect balance for someone like me.

Each of the characters presented in the book are unique and well developed. Diana herself, much as her character would strive to do, really takes centre stage when it comes to development. The author has quite evidently invested a lot of effort in getting Diana's persona just right. From the way she speaks to the smallest mannerisms, she is remarkably expressive of her thoughts and feelings. She can change the mask she wears at the drop of a hat... and for me really embodies the expression that the whole world is a stage. The performance, in Diana's mind, never seems to end. Sometimes, that mask slips in the heat of the moment though, and there are a few rare glimpses of Diana's true self.

Whilst I was less a fan of Michael overall (entirely a personal bias), his character was written perfectly for the role he plays in the story. He is the love-sick puppy forever at her heels, begging for her affections and jumping through hoops to get it. He is the type of man Diana needed and was no doubt waiting for... as he is easy to manipulate. It's not that I didn't like him; I just wish that there was a bit more about him. I know he is young, inexperienced with life and no doubt star-struck, but he falls into the honeyed trap hook, line and sinker! I spent most of my time feeling sorry for him really – for someone purportedly educated, he's a little wet behind the ears at times.

\*Insert smutty joke here\*

He did grow on me though, I have to say.

Where I found elements of Michael's personality a few cards shy of a full deck (my opinion extends to all people of this nature – my former self included), the same cannot be said for the narrative itself. Full of twists and turns, the sophisticated, melodramatic soap opera of Diana's life keeps the story flowing and evolving with each new development. The unexpected, less than fairy-tale like conclusion was surprising, but more importantly, brings some consequences of the pressures of fame to our attention.

Diana Christmas truly is a thriller fit for the silver screen itself.

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## **David Lucero says**

'An intriguing story of romance, suspense, and all-consuming vanity!'

Michael Mallory is a journalist out for a story. The kind of story that comes his way leaves him mesmerized. It's the kind of story that changes his life personally and professionally.

He meets Diana Christmas, a faded film star of yesteryear who is every bit as beautiful as she was back in the day when her name was across the big screen. The interview goes way beyond Michael's dreams. In fact, it goes beyond his wildest fantasies. As the two become romantically entwined, the lovely Diana confides a dark secret to Michael. It's the type of secret which stuns Michael.

Wishing to help Diana in any way possible, Michael embarks on a trail which leads him to the company of unsavory characters. They are the sort of people with connections, power, and influence. And they cannot be crossed! But in order to help Diana retrieve something of most valuable importance to her, Michael must infiltrate this dark world of powerful, rich men and confront them.

When Michael meets a male former film star involved in Diana's secret, he gets his first taste of what he's up against. It's the sort of meeting which leaves one feeling he should have skipped breakfast before visiting this man face to face. This meeting leads to another man who unlike the first, is a more dapper, conniving, and dangerous man, the kind who stops at nothing to get his way.

As Michael is nearer to finding what Diana so desperately wants, Diana insists on joining him on his crusade. Although he protests at first, Michael brings her along, and it is during this time he will learn if Diana's affections for him are true.... or if she is using him to get what she wants.

This novel is written in classic form. It contains snappy dialogue, intriguing characters who find themselves in desperate situations, and climactic scenes. It's original and will leave readers appreciating how this sort of writing panache can still be found in authors today.

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