SERIAL STORY

No Man's Land

A ROMANCE

By Louis Joseph Vance

Illustrations by Ray Walters

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SYNOPSIS.

Garrett Coast, a young man of New York City, meets Douglas Blackstock, who invites him to a card party. He accepts, although he dislikes Blackstock, the reason being that both are in love with Katherine Thaxter. Coast fails to convince her that Blackstock is unworthy of her friendship. At the party Coast meets two named Dundas and Van Tuyl. There is a quarrel, and Blackstock shoots Van Tuyl dead. Coast struggles to wrest the weapon from him, thus the police discover them. Coast is arrested for murder. He is convicted, but as he begins his sentence, Dundas names Blackstock as the murderer and kills himself. Coast becomes free, but Blackstock has married Katherine Thaxter and fled. Coast purchases a yacht and while sailing sees a man thrown from a distant boat. He rescues the fellow and finds it is Appleyard. They arrive at a lonely island, known as No Man's Land. Coast starts out to explore the place and comes upon some deserted buildings.

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

His voice must have carried to the animal; he heard a whine, the quick padding of paws, and a huge Scotch collie bounded clumsily out of the mista, passed him within an arm's length, vanished and returned, whining and circling, nose to ground, as if confused and unable to locate him. He watched the animal, half-stupefied with wonder at its erratic actions; then unconsciously moved slightly. A pebble grated beneath his foot. The dog wheeled toward him instantly and paused at attention, a forepaw lifted, ears pricked forward, delicate nostrils expanding and contracting as he sniffed for the scent of man.

"Here, boy, here!" Coast called softly and the next moment had the animal fawning upon him, alternately cringing at his feet and jumping up to muzzle his legs and hands, as if they were his own master's.

"Good boy! Steady now! So-o, so!" Puzzled by this demonstrative reception, Coast bent over the animal, trying to soothe it with voice and hand. It was plainly in a state of high excitement and evidently deeply grateful for his sympathetic toleration. He caught the finely modeled head between his palms, lifting up the muzzle. "Come, now," he said in a soothing tone, "let's have a look at you, old fellow. Good old boy—it's all right now—steady . . . Why, the poor brute's blind!"

For as its eyes rolled up he saw that they were blank and lightless, the irides masked with a film of white.

"Cataract," he said, releasing the dog. "That's why he couldn't see me. . . . I wondered . . . Hello, what now?"

Comforted and reassured, the dog had drawn away and resumed its mysterious circling, nosing the earth with anxious whinings. Abruptly is paused, tense, lithe frame quivering, then made off at a rapid trot in the direction whence it had appeared. A moment later the heartrending bowl wailed out again.

Almost unwillingly Coast followed, nerving himself against the discovery he feared to make. . . .

Half a dozen steps, and he almost fell over the dog. He recoiled with a cry of horrified consternation.

"Appleyard!. . ."

But it was not Appleyard.

On raw, naked earth in the middle of the rude village street, a man lay prone with one forearm crooked beneath his head, his other limbs repulsively sprawl. His head, near which the collie squatted, lifting its mournful muzzle to the sky, was bare and thickly thatched with reddish hair.

The man had been murdered, foully slain by a means singular and unique outside the Orient. Deep buried in a crease round his throat Coast had seen a knotted loop of crimson silk whipcord—the bow-string of the East. Above it the face was a grinning mask of agony and fear, dark with congested blood; a face that, none the less—despite those frightfully shadowed, blurred and swollen features—had unquestionably once been comely in the youthful Irish way. . . .

He rose and searched the ground for indications of a struggle. He found none. No confusion of footprints about the dead man showed on the damp earth. Apparently the victim had been taken from behind, without warning.

Irresolute, baffled, he lingered for another moment. . . .

By his side the dog howled deep and long. . . .

He turned, half-faint, and fled the place, bearing with him what he was not to forget for many a night: the picture of the blind dog mourning full-mouthed beside the crumpled, lifeless Thing that had been its master, there in that nameless spot of death and desolation.

The horror of it crawled like delirium in his brain.

"No Man's Land?" he muttered huskily . . . "Land of devils . . ."

CHAPTER VIII.

"There's no sense in this—none whatever!" Coast spoke for the first time in twenty minutes or so, "Where in thunderation am I, anyhow?"

He stood in thought, pursing his underlip between a thumb and forefinger, with alert to detect the clue to his bearings that was denied him, for all that the fog had thinned perceptibly within the last third of an hour. This much he knew and no more: that he was lost.

As from a great distance came the muffled mourning of the blind dog. Coast shivered. "I can't stand that," he said irritably, and plunged on in desperation.

Before him, presently, a wall started up out of the mist-bound earth, a low stone wall, grey where it was not green with lichen, and ran off inland, diverting the path to keep it company. Some distance farther on a second wall, counterpart of the other, intersected it at right angles. Here was a primitive stile. Coast climbed over and continued, following the thinly-marked, tortuous trail across a wide expanse of rolling, semi-sterile, treeless upland, thickly webbed with other footways.

Unexpectedly a rail fence sprang up across the path. Beyond it a company of indistinct figures uncertainly shadowed forth what he took, and what the event proved, to be a farmhouse with outbuildings.

Encouraged, Coast climbed the fence and addressed himself to the farmhouse, coming inevitably first to its main entrance, the kitchen door; which stood hospitably wide, revealing an interior untenanted but warm with recent use.

Coast did not enter, but moved round toward the front of the house, his footsteps noiseless on the sod.

By the corner he stopped as though he had run against an invisible barrier.

Ten feet distant a woman stood in the gateway of a fence of palings. Half turned away from him and more, so that only the rounded curves of cheek and chin were visible, she seemed absorbed in pensive meditation. One hand held the gate ajar, the other touched her cheek with slender fingers. She was dressed plainly to the verge of severity: a well-tailored tweed skirt ending a trifle above ankles protected by high tan boots; a blouse of heavy white linen with a deep sailor collar edged with blue—sleeves rolled well above the elbow, revealing arms browned, graceful and round; for her head no covering other than its own heavy coils of bronze shot with gold.

Coast was conscious of a tightening in his throat producing a feeling of suffocation, of a throbbing in his temples like the throbbing of a muffled drum. In a trice he had forgotten everything that had passed up to that moment; even the haunting thought of the murdered man dropped out of his consciousness; he was unable to entertain the faintest shadow of a thought that did not center about this woman, not a line of whose gracious pose, not a tress of whose matchless hair, not a tint of whose wonderful coloring but was more intimate to his memory than his own features.

She was—she had been—Katherine Thaxter.

CHAPTER IX.

His first translatable impulse was to turn and make good his escape before she became aware of him. But, as if the shock of recognition had palsied his will, he remained moveless. Contending emotions, resembling in flashes of heat and cold of an ague fit, alternately confounded and stunned him to the point of madness. For the first time in days he had forced home to him all that he had sought to banish from his life; his memories, of his gnawing passion, for the woman of the black crime that had severed their lives. Seeing before him the one being in the world dear to him, beyond expression, the one being irrevocably lost to him, he divined anew with bitter clarity the bridgeless gulf that yawned between them.

It was inevitable that the woman should in time become sensitive to his proximity. Though wholly unaware of his approach, though thoroughly assured that she was alone, a feeling of uneasiness affected her. She resisted it subconsciously and strove to continue the line of thought which had engaged her; but without effect. Then she turned her head, and threw a flickering glance toward the house; the shadow of his figure lay upon the boundary of her vision. She swung quickly to face him, suppressing a cry. Their eyes focussed to one another, his burning, her successively a swim with astonishment, incredulity and consternation. For a long moment during which neither moved or spoke while she grew pale and yet more pale and he flushed darkly, their questing glances crossed and recrossed like swords at play.

From Katherine's eyes a woman's soul gazed forth, experienced, mature, inured to sadness, gently brave; where had been the eager, questioning, apprehensive, daring spirit of a girl. He who had suffered and lived could see that she in no less degree had lived and suffered since that evening when last he had seen her beneath the street lights, bending forward from the seat of her town-car to bid him farewell. Life is not kind: Life had not been kind to her. If he had endured, she likewise had endured, in another way, perhaps, but in no less measure. She, too, had seen the splendid tapestry of her illusions rent to tatters by Life's implacable hand.

For this one man alone was answerable—Blackstock.

Of a sudden, on the echo of that name in his brain, Coast's hatred of the man, the animosity that had hardened to inexorable enmity in the crucible of his passion, recurred with tenfold strength and nearly overmastered him. It is only the ruin their own deeds have wrought that men can view complacently.

He stepped forward a single pace, with an unconscious gesture as one who tears from his throat that which hinders free respiration. "Where," he demanded without preface or apology, in a voice so thick and hoarse he hardly knew it for his own—"Where is he?"

He saw her recoil from his advance, but whether from fear or repugnance he could not guess. When she replied it was with evident difficulty.

"He?"

Impatient, he waved aside what seemed a palpable quibble: she must know very well what he meant. "What are you doing here, in this place, alone? Why did he leave you here?" He moved nearer, his voice rising to vehemence. "Why are you here, Katherine?"

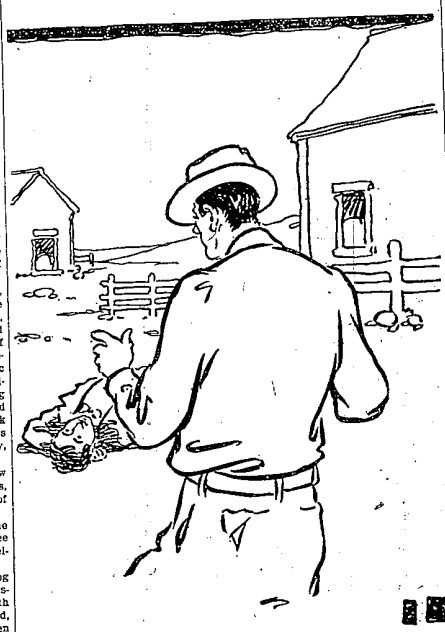
She drew back again, passing through the gateway, so that the fence stood between them. He comprehended dully that she did this through fear of him.

"I might ask as much of you."

"Of me?"... Her quietly interjected remark threw him momentarily off his line of thought.

"Yes, of you," she replied quietly, quick to see and take advantage of his distraction. "How did you get here? And why?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



The Man Had Been Murdered.

MICHIGAN BREVITIES

Allegan.—James W. Smith, when arraigned in the circuit court on the charge of murdering Mrs. Clara Flanagan, his mother-in-law, and against whom also stands charge of murdering her daughter, Miss Cora Flanagan, pleaded not guilty. Upon the plea of the illness of Smith's mother, Judge Padgham decided to put the case over for trial in the February term. Mrs. Smith's divorce case, which was started at Jackson before the shooting, not having been decided, she cannot testify, and the only witnesses to the tragedy who can testify are Smith's two sons, both under nine years of age.

Ann Arbor.—Dean M. E. Cooley received a letter from Prof. J. R. Allen, who is in Turkey on a year's leave of absence, which sets at rest the repeated rumors that Professor Allen will resign from Michigan's faculty at the close of this year and accept the deanship of Roberts college engineering school in Turkey. Professor Allen says: "Turkey is an interesting place to visit, but it is no place to live. You will see me back in Ann Arbor next year. There is no better way to find out how well off you are than to go away from home."

Lansing.—Seventy-five Congregational ministers from Grand Rapids, Detroit, Jackson and other cities will be the guests of Dr. J. S. Williamson of Plymouth Congregational church next week. They will come to this city to confer about matters relating to church work. The ministers will remain in the city for the luncheon to be given in Plymouth church Wednesday noon, for Rev. R. J. Campbell of London, Eng., and will attend the meeting in the evening, when Doctor Campbell will make a public address.

Battle Creek.—Assistant Engineer Adna Fuller of engine company No. 2, who nearly gave his life to save that of Margaret Pressley, who was suffocated in her bed, was removed from Nichols hospital to his home. He will be given an indefinite vacation with full pay, while there is talk of an effort to secure a Carnegie medal for him. Fuller made three attempts before he finally reached the dying girl. After handing her out a window, he fell back apparently dead.

Lansing.—Through action of the Supreme court the name of Sidney J. Alexander of Detroit was stricken from the rolls of attorneys and he is disbarred from further practice in any court of record in this state. In 1907 Alexander passed the legal requirements laid down by the state board of law examiners and was later permitted by a justice of the supreme court to sign the attorneys' roll in the clerk's office and take the oath.

Ann Arbor.—President Snyder of the Michigan Agricultural college, President McNair of the Michigan College of Mines, and President Hutchins of the University of Michigan are to have a conference at the Hotel Pontchartrain in Detroit next week in regard to the matter of duplication of work in the higher institutions of learning in this state. This conference is held at the suggestion of Governor Osborn.

Lansing.—Insurance Commissioner Palmer stated that about 50 unauthorized fire insurance companies prohibited from doing business in Michigan under the law passed by the last legislature have paid their fee and become authorized companies in Michigan. Many of them are the so-called New England mutual companies and the state has received about $100,000 in fees from them.

Three Rivers.—Victor Levers, aged twenty-four, drank carbolic acid following a quarrel with his wife over her purchase of a shirt to wear in memory of her brother recently dead and for which her mother had given her the money. The man's life was saved by prompt medical assistance and he was arrested pending an examination as to his sanity.

Hancock.—The first Christmas tree blaze of the year in this vicinity occurred here. At the Atlantic school, where teachers had prepared a tree and a program of exercises, the evergreen branches caught fire and a panic followed. Two teachers fainted, but the flames were extinguished with small damage.

Lansing.—It was announced that Governor Osborn has approved a requisition for Andrew J. Eminger, secretary and treasurer of the Hoover-Gamble company of Miamisburg, O., on a charge of obtaining money under false pretenses in connection with the equipment of the Jackson state prison with binding twine machinery.

Dowagiac.—James Haddon, once editor of Forest and Stream, and president of the Dowagiac Publishing company and the Dowagiac Bait company, died here of paralysis.

He was the originator of artificial bait and an authority on fish and bees. Some of his writings have been translated into six languages.

He had various occupations—builder, dancing teacher, preacher, lecturer, manufacturer, author, editor, publisher, fisherman, beekeeper, farmer, poet, inventor and lawyer.

He died wealthy.

Michigan Land Values Double.

Census Gives State Increase of 57.7 in Ten Years.

The thirteenth census of the United States shows in its statistics of agriculture in Michigan that the state ranks twenty-first in land area and eighth in population, for which the value of farm property is $1,988,858,379 (April 15, 1910), as against $690,355,734 in 1900, or an increase of 57.7 per cent. There are in all 200,690 farms for a total of 18,940,614 acres out of the total area of the state of 36,787,200 acres. The total population is 2,810,173. The statistics also show that the average value of land per acre in the state is $32.48, an increase in value for 10 years of 34.7 per cent. The average value of all property per farm is $5,261. More than one-half the state's land surface is included in farms.

In the upper peninsula no county, except Menominee, has as much as 20 per cent of its land in farms, and five counties grouped in the northern part of the lower peninsula fall in the same class. This group is surrounded by counties that have one-fifth to three-fifths of their land in farms. Farther south is a belt in which over four-fifths of the land is in farms, and south of this is a group of counties in which the proportion exceeds nine-tenths.

THE MARKETS

Detroit—Cattle: Receipts, 1,242; market, steady at last week's prices. We quote best steers and heifers, $6@6.75; steers and heifers, 1,000 to 1,100, $5.75@6; steers and heifers, 800 to 1,000, $4.25@5; steers and heifers that are fat, 500 to 700, $3.50@4; choice fat cows, $4@4.50; good fat cows, $3.50@3.75; common cows, $2.75@3.25; canners, $1.50@2.75; choice heavy bulls, $4@4.25; fair to good bologna bulls, $3.50@3.75; stock bulls, $2.50@3.25; choice feeding steers, 800 to 900, $4.50@5; fair feeding steers, 800 to 1,000, $3.75@4.25; choice stockers, 500 to 700, $3.50@4; fair stockers, 500 to 700, $3@3.50; stock heifers, $2.50@3.25; milkers, large, young medium age, $40@55; common milkers, $25@35.

Veal calves: Receipts, 533; market, good grades, active; common, dull; last week's prices; best, $8@8.75; others, $4@7.75.

Sheep and lambs: Receipts, 6,524; market, steady, last week's prices; sheep, strong. Best lambs, $5.50@7.75; for lambs, $4.75@5.25; light to common lambs, $3.50@6.50; fair to good sheep, $3@3.25; culls and common, $1.75@2.50.

Hogs: Receipts, 6,125; market, steady with Wednesday, 10c to 15c lower than last week. Range of prices: Light to good butchers, $6@6.10; pigs, $5@5.40; light yorkers, $5.75@6; stags, 1-3 off.

East Buffalo, N. Y.—Cattle. Steady; best steers, 1,400 to 1,600, $7.65@8; good prime steers, 1,300 to 1,400, $7.40@7.75; good prime steers, 1,200 to 1,300, $6.75@7; best shipping steers, 1,100 to 1,200, $5.75@6.25; medium butcher steers, 1,000 to 1,100, $5@5.50; light butcher steers, $4.50@5; best fat cows, $4.50@5.25; fair to good do., $3.50@4.25; common to medium do., $2.75@3.25; trimmers, $2.25@2.75; best fat heifers, $5.25@5.75; good fat heifers, $4.50@5; fair to good do., $3.75@4.25; stock heifers, $2.75@3; best feeding steers, deehorned, $3.50@4; stockers, all grades, $3.25@3.50; prime export bulls, $5@5.25; best butcher bulls, $4.25@4.75; bologna bulls, $3.25@4; stock bulls, $3@4; best milkers and springers, $60@80; common to good do., $25@35.

Hogs: Slow; heavy, $6.30@6.35; yorkers, $6.15@6.25; pigs, $5.70.

Sheep: Steady; top lambs, $6.25; yearlings, $4.50@4.75; wethers, $3.50@3.75; ewes, $3@3.25.

Calves: $4.50@9.25.

Grain, Etc.

Detroit—Wheat: Cash No. 2 red, 94¼ December opened at 96c, touched 96¾c and declined to 95¼c; May opened at $1.00¾ and declined to 99½c; July opened at 94¾c and declined to 94¼c; No. 1 white, 92c.

Corn: Cash No. 3, 61¾c; No. 4 white, 1 car at 61½c; No. 3 yellow, 2 cars at 62½c; No. 4 yellow, 1 car at 61½c, 2 at 61c; sample, 1 car at 59c, 1 at 55c.

Oats: Standard, 50½c; No. 3 white, 50c.

Rye: Cash No. 2, 84c.

Beans: Immediate, prompt and December shipment, $2.20; January, $2.25; May, $2.30.

Cloverseed: Prime spot, $12.50; March, $12.55; sample, 24 bags at $12, 9 at $11; prime alsike, $10.50; sample alsike, 18 bags at $10, 4 at $8.50.

Timothyseed: Prime spot, $3.20.

Barley: Sample, 1 car at $2.40, 1 car, fancy, at $2.45 per cwt.

GENERAL MARKETS.

Firmness continues to be the feature of the market for dairy products and everything is effected. It is difficult to get strictly fresh eggs and offerings of best grades of butter are light. Cheese is scarce and quoted higher. The feeling is a little firmer in poultry and chickens are quoted higher. In other lines the market is moderately active and firm.

Butter: Market firm; extra creamery, 36c; first creamery, 35c; dairy, 31c; packing, 26c per lb.

Eggs: Receipts, 226 cases; market firm; current receipts, cases included, 32c per doz.

Apples: Baldwin, $2.75@3; Greening, $2.75@3; Spy, $3@3.50; Ben Davis, $2@2.50 per bbl.

Potatoes: Car lots, bulk, 55c; sacks, 60c per bu.

Onions: 95c@$1 per bu.; Spanish, $1.65 per crate.

Hickory nuts: Shellbark, 24@30 per pound.

Dressed poultry: Chickens, 14@15c; hens, 16c; ducks, 16@17c; geese, 14@15c; turkeys, 16@17c per lb.

Dressed calves: Ordinary, 8@9c; fancy, 10@11c per lb.

Dressed hogs: Light, $7.75; medium, $7.50; heavy, $7 per cwt.

Honey: Choice to fancy comb, 18@19c per lb; amber, 14@15c.

Live poultry: Spring chickens, 16@20c; No. 2, 8c; hens, 8@9c; No. 2hens, 5c; ducks, 14c; young ducks, 15c; geese, 11@12c; turkeys, 16@17c.

Cabbages: $2@2.25 per bbl.

Vegetables: Beets, 65c per bu.; carrots, 65c per bu.; cucumbers, hothouse, $1.50@1.75 per doz.; celery, 20@25c per doz.; green onions, 12½c per doz.; green peppers, $1.25 per bu.; head lettuce, $1.50@2 per doz.; hothouse radishes, 25@30c per doz.; turnips, 60c per bu.; watercress, 25@30c per doz.; green beans, $2.50@3; wax beans, $4@4.50 per bu.; rutabagas, 45c per bu.

Provisions: Family pork, $18@21; mess pork, $17; medium clear, $17@18.50; smoked hams, 14½c; picnic hams, 10½c; shoulder, 10c; bacon, 13@14½c; briskets, 9½@10c; lard in tierces, 10½c per lb.

Hay: (Car lot prices, track Detroit) No. 1 timothy, $21.50@22; No. 2 timothy, $19@20; light mixed, $19@20; No. 1 mixed, $18.50@19; rye straw, $9.50@10; wheat and oat straw, $8 per ton.

President Taft has accepted an invitation to attend the dinner of the Aero Club of America in New York January 27.

It is proposed to erect a beet sugar factory in the copper country. The soil is especially adapted to the vegetable.

Joseph Franzel of Sandusky, who is in jail as the result of an attempt to kill his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Joseph Franzel, and who then attempted to take his own life, will recover from his injuries. A warrant will be sworn out charging him with assault with intent to kill.

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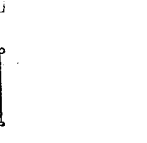

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GOT THE LETTERS MIXED

Clergyman's Mistake Resulted in Giving Decided Surprise to Dignified Archbishop.

One of the most amusing stories which the Hon. Lionel A. Tollemache tells in "Nuts and Chestnuts," is that entitled, "The Wrong Envelope." Mr. M——, a missionary, shortly before leaving England, received two letters—one from Archbishop Tait asking him to dine, and the other from the secretary of a religious society, a very old friend, asking him to preach. He accepted the archbishop's invitation, and at the same time wrote to the secretary, but put the letters into the wrong envelopes.

After the dinner at Lambeth the archbishop said to him: "Mr. M——, do you always answer your dinner invitations in the same way?"

"I do not understand, your grace."

The letter, which was then shown to the missionary, ran thus: "You old rascal! Why did you not ask me before? You know perfectly well that I shall be on the high seas on the date you name."—London Tit-Bits.

Not for Earthly Ears.

Doctor Reed, a minister, was opening the Sunday morning service at his church with the usual prayer. While he was in the midst of it a stranger entered the church and took a seat far back.

Doctor Reed was praying in a low note, and the man in the rear, after straining his ears for a while, called out: "Pray louder, Doctor Reed. I can't hear you."

Doctor Reed paused, opened his eyes and turned them around until they rested on the man in the rear. Then he said: "I was not addressing you, sir; I was speaking to God."—London Watchdog.

Touching.

Jennie—Everything he touches seems to turn to gold.

Jim—Yes; he touched me today for a sovereign.—London Opinion.