

# 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 Tui. There is a quarrel, and Blackstock shoots Van Tui 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 who is named 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. He discovers a man dead. Upon going further and approaching a house he sees Katherine Thaxter, who explains that her husband, under the name of Black, has bought the island. He is blind, a wireless operator and has a station there. Coast informs her that her husband murdered Van Tui. Coast sees Blackstock and some Chinamen burying a man. They fire at him, but he is rescued by Appleyard, who gets him to the Echo in safety, and there he reveals that he is a secret service man and has been watching the crowd on the island, suspecting they are criminals.

### CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)

"You can bet I shut off and skinned out of there in a jiffy; I'd been in a cold sweat all the while. The racket my sending railed had sounded as loud as the Trump of Doom; I couldn't save my neck understand how Black failed to hear it, even if he were at the other end of the island, and come back and exterminate me. So I beat it on the dead jump.

"The farm-house was in my way, however, and I pulled up there to reconnoitre. There was a sound of voices out front, and I went in the back way—the premises being empty—and snoopied to the front windows and eavesdropped. To that instant I'd had never a thought that you might be mixed up in the mess; but I recognized your voice, and overheard just enough to open my eyes to the complexity of the situation.

"I didn't linger long enough to hear much; my position being somewhat delicate—from more than one point of view. So I sneaked out by the rear again, and laid for you on the path to the beach. Then that shower came up and I lost touch with the path. By the time I'd re-found it and traced my way back to the farm-house, you were gone. I set sail in pursuit, but by the time I sighted the deserted village, you were invisible, and Blackstock (by this time I knew his right name) was superintending the planting of power. Seeing nothing of you I concluded—and hoped—you'd sloped for the boat, and dodged round after you. Those shots stopped me right by the boat on the beach; I saw you coming and

utes of the time her anchor splashed over her bows, Mr. Appleyard, his plans formulated and communicated to Mr. Coast, was noisily asleep in the cabin—enjoying a rest which Coast, for all his own weariness of body and mind, could not begrudge him.

For six hours the younger man stood a lonely watch, companioned only by the melancholy voice of the bell buoy off the southern entrance, a sound, the most forlorn and dreary known to man, which came fitfully to his ears in the occasional lulling of the wind.

As six bells sounded Appleyard hopped on deck, yawning and rubbing his eyes, but with a light in the latter, as soon as he permitted them to be seen, and a springiness in his movements which testified to the refreshing soundness of his slumbers.

"Howdy?" he chirruped. "Nothing alarming turned up, eh?"

"Not a thing," said Coast.

"Good enough. Don't look for 'em till evening. When'd this lull set in?" Coast informed him. "That's all right; fit in with their plans; they'd rather make a landing in the dark, anyway."

"What difference would that make?"

"Not much; only the fewer boats touching at No Man's Land, the less attention attracted. I s'pose you know there's a life saving station on Gay Head? Sure; and part of its job is to keep a list of everything that passes by, from a rowboat to a coast-wise liner."

"Of course; but—look here, Appleyard."

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"Doesn't it smell like an Easter to you?"

yard." Coast paused, doubt tinting his tone.

"Sir, to you?"

"There's one thing been troubling me. It seems to me we're taking a lot for granted. Of course, to begin with, I was only too keen to believe the worst of Blackstock. But, seriously, what warrant have you for believing he's mixed up with this smuggling game?"

Appleyard rubbed his nose reflectively. "Well," he drawled, grinning. "I haven't got any sure-nough good excuse, I admit. I just know it's so. That's all."

"But—"

"What's Blackstock sticking out there for? Not because he likes it, you can bet; not solely because he's afraid of getting caught—for he settled on No Man's Land before Dundas came through with his confession; not because he would be safer in some corner of the world across the water—"

"I told you his wife said—"

"She said precisely what he told her. Naturally. Probably believes it. Rot! . . . The real reason is the reason why he dropped his remittances to Dundas; because he's broke, and down, and desperate—ready to turn his hand to anything to earn a dishonest dollar. And this job's ideal for his purposes," Appleyard wound up triumphantly.

"But," Coast argued, "she has money.

"How do you know?"

"At least, her aunt had, and it was to go to her."

"But did it? I'll lay you a handsome wager that either she never got it or it wasn't much anyway and Blackstock managed to run through it with the customary facility of scoundrels of his class.

"Don't talk to me: I tell you, I know a lot of things for certain that I don't know for sure; and this is one of 'em. . . . And now if you'll just kindly quit finding fault with my impeccable management of this affair, and duck below and pound your

ear for a couple of hours, or until I call you, you'll be in much better shape for what's before you this night."

Coast, soothed by the swash of waves and the softly modulated tolling of the distant buoy, presently dozed off; nor did he wake until Appleyard shook his shoulder several hours later.

He started up in some perturbation—with that singular flutter of the heart that men sometimes waken to face a crucial hour.

"Well—" he asked, half dazed.

"Time," returned Appleyard coolly. "They're just about to stand in round Lone Rock. Come on deck."

His small head and narrow shoulders were momentarily silhouetted against a violet-shaded square of sky that filled the companion opening, then disappeared. Coast, realizing from the twilight within and without that the hour was late, followed with expedition.

"What's o'clock?" he asked as he stepped on deck.

"About seven. Take the wheel," Appleyard dropped lightly into the engine-pit as Coast obediently moved to the stern and grasped the spokes. His first glance was comprehensive, summing up the situation in a single cast; he was now fully awake and very alert.

With a muffled cough the motor began to throb and drum. The Echo gathered way. Coast swung her gently to starboard as Appleyard, throttling the speed to half, climbed out and dropped the hatch.

"Right," the little man approved.

## PENNSYLVANIA STATE NEWS

### Newsy Items Gathered From All Parts of the State.

South Bethlehem.—The Borough Council is looking into plans that call for a new \$100,000 sewage system.

Coopersburg.—Edgar Kuerr was elected president at the annual banquet of the Alumni Association of the high school.

Mauch Chunk.—Dr. Swank, of East Mauch Chunk, State Veterinarian in Carbon county, is engaged in the work of inspecting the barns throughout the upper end of the county.

Allentown.—Samuel Smith, charged with deserting his wife only two weeks after their marriage a year ago, wept copiously when arrested, but his tears did not save him from jail.

Allentown.—James K. Mosser, a retired business man, was stricken with apoplexy while in the doctor's office, where he had called for medicine as a result of feeling ill.

Mauch Chunk.—Miss Bridget Tree, an aged lady, fell from her bed at her home in an illness and broke her collar-bone. She is in a most critical condition.

Allentown.—Oliver D. Schock, secretary of the Pennsylvania Chestnut Tree Blight Commission, and two field agents, made a tour of Lehigh county to investigate reports of the disease.

Reading.—Frank C. Smink, president of the Reading Iron Company, has tendered the Reading Playground Association the use of a part of the old Mellvain rolling mill property for playground purposes.

Wyomissing.—While Henry Wagner was passing over a railroad bridge, his horse ran away. He was thrown from the vehicle and badly bruised. The horse tore the vehicle to splinters and ran two miles before being caught.

Emaus.—Officers Miller and Renninger arrested Stephen Kotlan and Mike Misera on the charge of assault and battery preferred by Joseph Isaac, a peddler. After the hearing both entered bail.

Chain.—An old-fashioned barn raising took place on the farm of Oliver Kleckner, and in four hours' time the timbers for a new barn were erected by forty-three neighbors. A dinner followed.

Allentown.—Henry N. Druckenmiller, manager for a music house, reports that he was robbed of sixty-nine dollars by a gang of thugs on a trolley car between Tamaqua and Mauch Chunk.

Allentown.—None of the South Allentown girls, who had been argued, could identify Joseph Santelli, arrested as being the Jack the Huggler, and at a hearing before Squire DeLong he was discharged for want of evidence.

Mauch Chunk.—Prof. Druckenmiller, a representative of an Allentown firm of music dealers, informed the Mauch Chunk police that while on the train he was relieved of sixty-nine dollars by a pickpocket.

Bradford.—The compound house and waxmaking department, operated in connection with the Emery Refining Company, were destroyed by fire, with an estimated loss of \$75,000 to \$100,000.

Carlisle.—On a quilt just completed by Mrs. Jane Lutz, of Bloersville, for the Aid Society of the Zion Reformed Church of near Newburg, there are 470 names. Each autograph was written and worked on a separate block of the quilt.

Mauch Chunk.—Harry Leslie, of Palmerton, is a candidate for Delegate to the Republican State Convention from Carbon county. Warren Horn, of Lehigh, is also a candidate. Neither has any opposition. Two will be elected.

Allentown.—Under the law designed to prevent foreigners from having firearms in their possession, Mayor Rinn fined Stephen Bama forty dollars, of which twenty-five was for violation of the act and the rest at the rate of five dollars for each of three shots fired.

Allentown.—Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Lobach, of Allentown, were surprised to find on their porch a peddler and a gardener which had been stolen from their home eighteen months ago. There is no clew to the conscience-stricken thief.

Lansford.—The directors of the Carbon County Industrial Society met and decided to hold the Lehigh Fair September 24 to 27, inclusive. Committees on races, attractions, exhibits, advertising, music were appointed, and it was decided to make a special feature of fruit and farm products.

West Chester.—Pierre S. DuPont, a member of the family of powder manufacturers of Wilmington, Del., who has a country home near Longwood, has notified the supervisors of East Marlboro Township that he will bear half the expense of macadamizing the public roads in the township if they will accept his proposition.

Allentown.—Theodore Baker, a veteran of the famous Forty-seventh Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, which was part of General Sheridan's command during the Civil War, died on his farm, at Limeport, Lehigh county. He was seventy-three years old.

Millmont.—Owing to a defective flue, the homes of John Natteck and William Rapke, neighbors, were nearly consumed by fire, and many other houses would have been destroyed if it would not have been for the quick run of the Liberty Fire Company, of Reading.

Wise men are instructed by reason, men of less understanding by experience, the most ignorant by necessity.

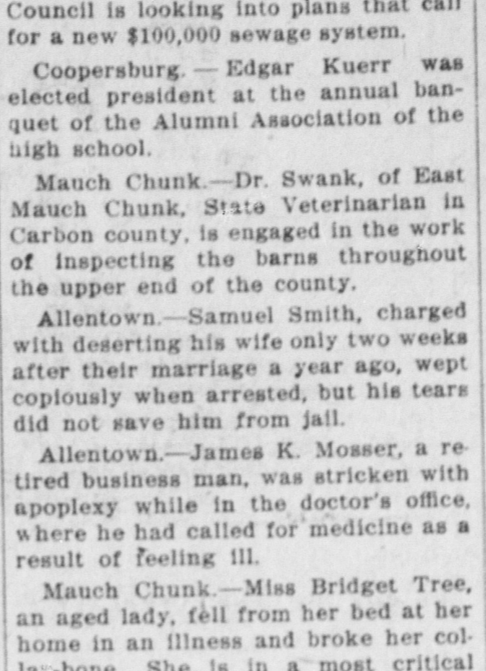
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(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Varied Instruction.

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