

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 Tuxl. There is a quarrel, and Blackstock shoots Van Tuxl 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 had Coast put in a prison. Coast informs her that her husband murdered Van Tuxl. Coast sees Blackstock and seems to be killing a man. They fire at him, but he is rescued by Appleyard, who gets him to the boat 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. Coast is anxious to follow the mystery of No Man's Land, and is determined to save Katherine. Appleyard believes that Black and his gang make a side of the wireless station to conduct a smuggling business. Coast penetrates to the lair of Blackstock's disguise. Katherine enters the room and passes him a note which tells Coast that neither his life nor her own are safe. Coast feels that Blackstock suspects him. Appleyard and the Echo disappear. Coast assures Katherine of his protection, and she informs him that they are to abandon the island immediately. The blind man and his coolie servant overpowered Coast, who afterwards escapes and is met by Katherine, who is to him. They discover a yawl before they can reach it, the coolie disables the craft. Black appears and tells Katherine that he is no longer a coolie. He is overpowered, and Coast and Katherine fly from the spot, and go to a remote part of the island and seize a boat which they see in the distance.

CHAPTER XIX—(Continued.)

Out of the dusk, in which objects were just perceptible, the bungalow loomed up before them. By common consent they paused. Coast looking back toward the beach, Katherine peering up into his face.

"Are they coming, Garrett?"

"Not yet," he said, perplexity in his tone. "It's as I thought: they know they can lay hands on us at any time. So we can go hang until they're ready to take up our case."

"But," he amended, squaring his shoulders and his jaw and infusing his manner with a confidence and decision he had been glad to feel, "we'll fool 'em. It won't be long now."

"You mean before your friend—Mr. Appleyard?"

"Yes. He's sure to be here at almost any minute—he or the revenue cutter."

"But, Garrett . . . what are we going to do in the meantime?"

"We'll have to stick to the open till the Echo comes. Is there a lantern in the house—anything to make a light with?"

"Why—yes," she replied in surprise; "there's a kerosene lantern we used at night, when it was necessary to go to the farm-house. But . . . wouldn't it lead them to us? Isn't darkness our surest cover?"

"Absolutely; but I've got to have something to signal Appleyard with. We agreed that I should show a light on the sand pit, in event of any trouble; but he'll be counting on the cutter being here by this time, and it won't do to let him make a landing on the beach near the long-boat."

"I understand. Just a minute . . . is there time?"

"Plenty," he said briefly, adding inconsistently: "But hurry."

He followed her into the house and, while she disappeared to look for the lantern, found his way to the divan and robbed it of its covering—a heavy steamer rug, which he folded and tucked beneath one arm before Katherine returned.

"You won't want the light now?"

"No. Give me your hand."

They stepped out into unrelieved right darkness, dense and warm and rendered tangible by its burden of humidity.

In the north arose a confusion of many voices; and in that quarter, likewise, was a fiery show of weaving lantern-lights.

Hand in hand they stole away like thieves, not three minutes before the bungalow was invaded by Blackstock and the crew of the schooner—a loud-mouthed, roystering company, making hideous the night with the clamor of their disputations and their cursings.

Unseen and all unsuspected (so far as they could say, with no sign given them of either detection or pursuit) they hurried off as warily and fearfully as wild things skirting the haunts of men, skulking silently over hills and down through hollows, over fields and ferns, until at length they came

without accident out upon the spreading sweep of sand to the east of the long, low-lying spit.

Later they found themselves at the end of this, the northern extremity of the island; and here Coast put down the unlighted lantern and spread the rug in a slight depression between low dunes.

Chimerical mirth encompassed them, abysmal, impassive, penetrated only by dimmed rays of light from the windows of the bungalow, seemingly incalculable miles distant.

Slowly the hours ebbed. They had long since ceased to speak. From the regularity of her breathing Coast believed she slept despite her fears, overcome by thorough exhaustion of every fiber, nerve and faculty. For himself he would not stir, for fear of waking her.

The light of a lantern peeped over the ridge, inland, and descended, wavering, through the Cold Lairs to the beach, then became stationary near the edge of the water, over which it shot a long, slender spear of soft radiance.

He understood that a guard had tardily been set over the selve-boat.

From the bungalow came thin, far sounds of voices, now and then a husky shout ecumenical in that hour of calm, immutable peace.

They were drinking up there, forgetful alike of danger and their recent disaster.

Abruptly he saw that the lane of lantern light was shattered and dancing. He jumped to his feet, with a glance above that showed him a faint flash of starlight. He held up his hand and a breath of air blew cool against it—a shiver of breeze out of

the long-boat awakened to its approach, apparently for the first time, and sounded the alarm by firing a shot from his revolver. A second later, in desperation, Coast sent a piercing whistle echoing over the waters.

Immediately, at the pistol shot, the Echo swerved sharply off to the west, her red side light disappeared; and for a full minute held on so before she swung smartly on her heel and showed first the green and then the red, bearing straight as an arrow for the end of the sand spit.

On the island, at the same, the results of the report (which, when the catboat came about, was followed by four others in brisk succession) were no less marked. Down the wind from the bungalow floated a wild chorus of shouts and calls. In its vicinity half a dozen twinkling lights studded the darkness on the uplands, springing to life as if by magic, and were whistled hither and thither like so many will-o'-the-wisps, suggesting a stupid, half-distracted ferment of conflicting advice, argument and will among the smugglers. Presently, however, some sort of order was evidently evolved; the lights converged to a common center and bore swiftly down toward the beach.

Coast put down the lantern on the swelling, rounded summit of a small dune, and took the steamer rug from Katherine, mechanically tucking it as he divided troubled attention between the bearing boat and the distant rattle—now streaming headlong down through the Cold Lairs and shouting as they came.

"No more need for this," he said, referring to the rug; "the light won't tell them anything they don't know."



Some Sort of Order Was Evidently Evolved.

the southwest. All this meant clearing.

Swiftly the breeze freshened. Vague forms of mist faded before his straining sight. A musical whisper and clashing of waves echoed through the hush of night. And like a curtain the fog fell back and away, and was not.

About two miles offshore, to the northwest, a green light shone like a colored star, with a white light a little above—at about the height of the Echo's masthead. And while he looked the two moved and swung round, until he saw not only green and white, but the red port light as well, all moving steadily toward the island.

CHAPTER XX.

In his arms Katherine moved with a stifled moan of weariness, a gasp, and then a stiffening of her body which told him that she was now wide awake and mistress of her wits, in full comprehension of their position.

"Katherine—"

"What is it?"

"The Echo—Appleyard, I think—I'm sure. He'll be here in just a few minutes—ten or fifteen; and you must help me show the light."

"Help me up," she said in a dejected voice.

He rose and took her hands, lifting her to her feet. With one thought upmost in both minds, they turned toward the sea.

Off to the northwest the red port and white masthead lights of the catboat were slipping briskly shoreward—the green no longer visible—standing in for the beach where the long-boat lay.

A groan escaped Coast.

"Oh, the devil!" he said beneath his breath, exasperated; and aloud, half-frantically: "Hurry! He's taking the other light for my signal. Here—grab up the steamer's rug and thrust it unceremoniously into Katherine's hand—hold this so, to hide it from the beach, while I light the lantern."

With agonizing slowness the minutes sped, and still the boat held on directly for the beach, over the Cold Lairs. Then abruptly the waterer by

now. But . . . His perturbed voice trailed off irresolutely as he stood, a frowning glance directed down the beach.

Katherine was quick to catch the note of worry in his tone. "What is it?" she asked. "You're not afraid—you don't think—"

"No," he reassured her stoutly; "they're much too far away to catch us now. Only—hark to that!"

There was, in fact, a strange and sinister sound in the relping of the gang; their cries were indistinguishable, but owned a dull, level pitch of minatory rage, infinitely perturbing, since it seemed so senseless—like the harsh and inarticulate snarling of an infuriated lunatic.

A shiver shot along Coast's spine. He found the woman, trembling, had moved close to his side.

"What does it mean?"

"I don't know," he said—"sounds like a pack of starving wolves."

"No matter; it can't concern us. In two minutes . . ."

The Echo had drawn near enough for the noise of the motor to be perceptible; she was moving under power only, her sail down but not furled, hanging in stiff and clumsy folds in the lazy-jacks. He could even see the tender trailing astern, and make out a single figure at the wheel. . . . Then the latter bobbed down out of sight for an instant, and the purring of the engine was abrupted. There followed the splash of the anchor, and the little vessel brought up quickly, swinging wide to face the wind.

With a warning cry Katherine stepped quickly away from Coast and swung round, whipping out her small but effective pearl-handled revolver.

"Stop!" she cried in a vibrant voice. "Halt, or I'll fire!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Resort Prospectus.

"Going to run daily excursions this year?"

"Oh, yes."

"I notice you don't advertise a gorge any more."

"No, I made it a ravine instead. Some people thought a gorge meant a lot to eat."

COMMERCIAL

Weekly Review of Trade and Market Reports.

NEW YORK.—Wheat—Spot easy; No. 2 red, 124½¢ c 1 f, domestic basis to arrive and export; 124½¢ c 1 f, f o b aboard to arrive; No. 1 Northern Du luth, 127½¢ f o b aboard.

Corn—Spot firm; Export, 87½¢ c 1 f b, aboard.

Butter—Creamery, extras, 30¢ 30½¢; do, firsts, 29¢ 29½¢; do, seconds, 28¢ 28½¢; do, thirds, 26½¢ 27½¢; State, dairy, finest, 29½¢ 30¢; do good to prime, 28¢ 29¢; do, common to fair, 24¢ 27¢. Factory, current make firsts, 24½¢ 25¢; do, seconds, 23½¢ 24¢; packing stock, current make, No. 2, 22½¢.

Eggs—Fresh gathered seconds, regular packed, 17¢ 18¢.

Dressed poultry steady. Western fowls, 14¢ 16½¢; turkeys, 13¢ 22¢.

PHILADELPHIA.—Wheat 1c lower; No. 2 red winter, in export elevators, 112¢ 114¢.

Corn steady; No. 2 yellow for local trade, 88¢ 89½¢.

Oats ½c lower; No. 2 white natural, 63¢ 63½¢.

Butter weak, 2¢ 3c lower; Western creamery special, 32¢; do, extra, 29½¢ 31¢; nearby prints, extras, 34¢.

Eggs firm; Pennsylvania and other nearby firsts, f c, 56.15 per case; do, current receipts, f c, 55.85 per case; Western firsts, f c, 56.15 per case; do, current receipts, f c, 55.85 per case.

Cheese firm; New York full creams, new, 16½¢; do, part skims, new, 19¢ 14¢.

Live poultry firm; fowls higher; fowls, 15¢ 16¢; old roosters, 11¢ 11½¢; young, do, staggy, 12¢ 13¢; young chickens, 16¢ 17¢; ducks, 13¢ 14¢; geese, 9¢ 10¢; broilers, 36¢ 38¢.

Dressed poultry steady; fowls, Western, choice to fancy, 16¢; Southern and Southwestern, do, 15½¢; fair to good, 12¢ 15¢; old roosters, 12¢; roasting chickens, nearby, 16¢ 18¢; Western, 14¢ 18¢.

BALTIMORE.—Wheat. The market for Western opened steady; May, 119½¢ nominal; spot No. 2 red, 119½¢ nominal; No. 2 red Western, 119½¢ nominal; and July, 116½¢ asked.

Corn—Western opened dull; May, 54¢ nominal; spot mixed, 84¢ nominal.

Oats—No. 2 white, 63¢ asked; standard white, 62½¢ asked; No. 3 white, 62¢ asked.

Hay—Timothy, No. 1, 22¢; No. 2, 22¢; No. 3, 22¢ 27¢. Clover Mixed—Choice light, 27¢; No. 1, 25¢ 26.50¢; No. 2, 24.50¢ 25.50¢. Alfalfa—Choice, 25.50¢ 27¢; No. 1, 23.50¢. Clover—No. 1, 23¢ 23.50¢; No. 2, 22¢ 21¢.

Butter—Creamery, fancy, 31½¢ 32¢; creamery, choice, 30¢ 30½¢; creamery, good, 28¢ 29¢; creamery, imitation, 26¢; creamery, prints, 31¢ 33¢.

Eggs—Maryland, Pennsylvania and nearby firsts, 18¢; Western firsts, 18¢; West Virginia firsts, 18¢; Southern firsts, 17¢. Guinea eggs, 9c. Recreated or rehandled eggs, ½c to 1c higher.

Cheese—Jobbing lots, per lb., 18¢ 19¢.

Live Poultry—Chickens, old hens, heavy, 14½¢; do, small to medium, 14½¢; old roosters, 9¢; winter, 28¢ 32¢; spring, 1½ lbs and under, 49¢ 42¢. Ducks—White Pekings, 13¢; Muscovy, 12¢; puddle, 12¢. Pigeons, per pair—Young, 25¢ 30¢; old, 25¢ 30¢. Guinea fowl, each, 25c.

Live Stock

CHICAGO.—Cattle: market strong; beefs, \$6.10 9.30; Texas steers, \$5.90 7.60; Western steers, \$6.10 7.85; stockers and feeders, \$4.20 7.00; cows and heifers, \$3.00 7.50; calves, \$5.20 8.10.

Hogs—Market strong to 5c higher; light, \$7.35 7.85; mixed, \$7.40 7.90; heavy, \$7.40 7.95; rough, \$7.40 7.65; pigs, \$5.00 7.00; bulk of sales, \$7.65 7.85.

Sheep—Market weak and 15¢ 40¢ lower; native, \$3.75 6.25; Western, \$4.00 6.25; yearlings, \$4.00 7.25; lambs, native, \$5.00 8.50; Western, \$5.75 8.50.

KANSAS CITY, MO.—Cattle, market steady to 10c higher; dressed beef and export steers, \$8.15 9.00; fair to good, \$6.85 8.15; Western steers, \$6.50 8.75; stockers and feeders, \$5.00 7.25; Southern steers, \$4.50 8.30; Southern cows, \$4.25 6.25; native cows, \$4.00 7.50; native heifers, \$5.50 8.25; bulls, \$5.00 7.00; calves, \$5.00 8.00.

Calves—Best grades steady; others weak. Veals, \$7.00 9.25; culls, \$5.00 6.50. Dressed calves steady; city dressed veals, 11½¢ 15¢; country dressed, 9½¢ 12¢.

Sheep and lambs—Sheep easier; lambs slow to 25c lower; spring lambs steady. Sheep, \$4.00 6.00; culls, \$2.25 3.50; lambs, \$6.25 9.25; culls, \$5.00 6.00; spring lambs, \$8.50 10.25.

Hogs—Steady at \$7.75 8.20; pigs, \$7.00 7.75.

NEW YORK.—Beef, Steers slow, steady to strong; fat bulls and fat cows steady; others slow and 10 to 15c lower. Steers, \$6 8.90; bulls, \$3.50 7; cows, \$2.50 6. Dressed beef firm at 11½¢ to 13½¢. Exports, 27¢ 28¢ and 29¢ sheep.

Hogs—Market steady to 5c higher; bulk of sales, \$7.50 7.80; heavy, \$7.70 7.85; packers and butchers, \$7.55 7.85; lights, \$7.40 7.70; pigs, \$5.50 7.75.

TERMS.—The terms of subscription to the paper are one dollar per year in advance.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Display advertising of ten or more lines, for three or more insertions, eight cents per line for each issue. Display advertising occupying less space than ten lines and for less than three insertions, from ten to twenty cents per line for each line, according to composition.

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