

The DESTROYING ANGEL

By Louis Joseph Vance

Can you imagine yourself dead for five years? Suppose at the end of that time you turned up suddenly among old friends in New York city, asked for an accounting of your life and announced your intention of finding the girl you had married under pressure before you disappeared—much to their shocked surprise! That's the position in which we find Hugh Whitaker in this installment. How his plans ruin the important plans of others about him, how he creates a furore at a big theatrical performance and how he finds his life, is told with dramatic effect.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

Whitaker laughed quietly and turned the conversation, accepting the manager's pseudo-confidences at their face value, but in a pure bluff, quite consistent with the managerial pose. They rose presently and made their way out into the crowded, blaring night of Broadway.

It was possible for her to make herself heard, the actress swam, round from the mirror and addressed one of the other players. Her voice was clear, strong and vibrant, yet sweet; but Whitaker paid no heed to the lines she spoke. He was staring, fascinated at her face.

The audience was getting beyond control. In the gallery the gods were beginning to testify to their normal intolerance with shrill whistles, cat-calls, sporadic bursts of hand-clapping and a steady, sinister rumble of stamping feet. In the orchestra and dress circle people were moving about restlessly and talking at the top of their voices in order to make themselves heard above the growing din.

They turned east through Forty-sixth street, abandoned by a dense throng whose faces, all turned in one direction, shone livid with the glare of a gigantic electric sign, midway down the block.

Amusement glimmered in the manager's round little eyes. "You don't know her, wait till you get a look at her off the stage." Then he checked the reply that was starting on Whitaker's lips, with a warning lift of his hand and brows: "Sh! Catch this, now. She's a wonder in this scene."

The superb actress behind the counterpane of the hunted and hungry shop-girl was holding spellbound with her inevitable witchery the most sophisticated audience in the world; like whom in a windmill it swayed to the modulations of her curvaceous voice as if from through a business-arms with the permanent, suddenly ceasing to speak, she turned down to a chair near the footlights, followed by a torrent of shrill vituperation under the lash of which she quivered like a whipped thoroughbred.

Whitaker followed, to be led down a blind alley between the theater and the adjoining hotel. An illuminated sign advertised the stage door, through which, after a brief halt, they entered the postcard-studio. Max, dragging him by the arm—passed through a small door into the gateway behind the boxes.

"Curtain's just up," Max told him; "Sara doesn't come on till the middle of the act. Make yourself comfortable; I'll be back before you know it." He drew aside a curtain and ushered his guest into the right-hand stage-box, then vanished. The few empty stalls were rapidly filling up. There was a fluent movement through the aisles. A solitary hum and rattle rose from the floor of the audience which was already seated. The business going on upon the stage was receiving little attention from Whitaker as little as from anyone.

Well, what's your guess? Will Whitaker's wife receive him with gratitude and open arms—because he saved her honor long ago—or will she look him over calmly and chase him off the place?

Max slipped quickly into the box and handed his guest a program. "Here's a horse whopper, indicating a chair near the rail. "You may never have another chance to see the greatest living actress. Wonderful hours," he whispered, sitting down beside Whitaker. "Drummond hasn't shown up yet, though."

He knew in his heart that she was his wife. For a brief instant on the empty mid-seat in the fourth row. A shade of additional pallor showed on the woman's face. She looked quickly, questioning, toward the box of her husband.

Matter of height. We are informed by an otherwise veracious friend that he was standing in front of a department store, gazing raptly into one of the display windows, when he heard his conversation with the Greek. "I said a man whose wife—or maybe she wasn't—had made him stop while she rubbed at the dresses, when you're getting a dress, which costs more—the waist or the skirt?"

Apprehension broke out like a thunderbolt, sending her through the big auditorium, but the actress showed no consciousness of it. She was standing before a cheap mirror, removing her hat, arranging her hair with the typical, unassuming grace of a young shop-girl; she was acting—before the scene, with no time to waste in pondering to her popularity by bows and set smiles; she remained before the glass, pre-occupied with the business, until the applause subsided.

CHAPTER VI. The Late Extra. Impulsively Whitaker ran up to follow Max, then hesitated and sank back in doubt, his head a whirl. He was for the time being shocked out of all propriety for clear reasoning or right thinking. Apprehension in his consciousness he had a half-formed notion that it wouldn't help matters if he were to force himself in upon the crisis behind the scenes.

Couldn't Give Up the Movies. Said one charming young creature while sipping her tea: "Did you hear that Elekta and Olaf have broken their engagement?" "Heavens, no!" exclaimed the other charming creature, almost choking over her cake. "I thought they were the original turtles doves."

Under cover of the applause, he turned to Max. "Who is that? What is her name?" "The divine Sara," Max answered, his eyes shining.

Expert, indeed. A strange man had been sent to polish the floors. His manner was anything but energetic, and the lady sniggered, but he would not polish them properly.

Where They Were Located. Two wretched-looking tramps were brought up before a justice of the peace. Addressing the court looking one the justice said, "Where do you live?" "Nowhere."

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES DRINK 32,850,000,000 CUPS OF TEA IN YEAR

The people of the United States consumed 32,850,000,000 cups of tea during the year ending June 30, 1916. At least enough tea was imported into the United States to brew that many cups of the beverage. The imports for the year amounted to a surprising 100,000,000 pounds, or more than one pound for every man, woman and child in the country. About 32,850,000,000 pounds more tea was consumed during this year than during the preceding 12 months.

SMALL PART OF COST TOBACCO OUTPUT HUGE

No Burden in Free Text Books, Says Uncle Sam. Annual Value of Products Passes Half Billion Mark.

Uncle Sam is taking good care of his ever-increasing class of tea-drinking people, and in order better to protect them from impure or adulterated tea, he maintains a special corps of examiners and assistant examiners, all under the direction of a superintendent, in Washington, D. C. There are at present seven examiners in the seven districts of the country, and whenever tea is imported from a port where there is no examiner a sample is sent to an examiner at the nearest port.

UNCLE SAM HAS REMOVED GREAT AVIATION HAZARD

Government's Experts Have Eliminated Danger of Bursting Projectors, It is Announced. Uncle Sam's experts have succeeded in removing one of the paramount hazards in aviation, it is announced. The bursting of aerial projectors has been the source of a large part of the aviation accidents and the danger of this has now been eliminated, it is said.

UNCLE SAM TO BUILD SHIPS

Law Passed by Last Congress Creates Corporation With a Capital of \$50,000,000. Uncle Sam is now ready to become a ship owner. The shipping bill, which has been signed by the president and is now a law, creates a corporation capitalized at \$50,000,000.

FROM ALL OVER

Western Africa has a small species of hipopotamus not much larger than a pig. It has been proposed that this animal be brought to the swamps of Louisiana for cultivation as a satisfactory substitute for beef. The big spotted animal break down fences.

WINCHESTER

HUNTING RIFLES. When you look over the sights of your rifle and see an animal like this silhouetted against the background, you like to feel certain that your equipment is equal to the occasion. The majority of successful hunters use Winchester Rifles, which shows how they are esteemed. They are made in various styles and calibers and ARE SUITABLE FOR ALL KINDS OF HUNTING.

OLD WAR ENGINES

British "Tank" Is One of Long Line of Queer Devices. Wooden Horse of Troy, Hide-Covered Towers Used by Alexander in Siege of Tyre and Caesar's Javelins with Iron Points.

The British "tank," described as a car of death resembling a ponderous, slow-moving steel caterpillar, in Washington, D. C. There are at present seven examiners in the seven districts of the country, and whenever tea is imported from a port where there is no examiner a sample is sent to an examiner at the nearest port.

SHORTENING BIRD SEASON

Pennsylvania is the latest of the states to take up the question of shorter open seasons on game birds, and good reasons for curbing the activities of hunters are stated in a statement of the game commission now being sent to individuals and sporting associations.

COULD CURE THAT PART

"Every one of us has that part," "I can give you something for your head,"—Boston Transcript.

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HAVE YOU PICKED A LEMON?

English Writer Not Altogether Complimentary in His Remarks on Marital Happiness. Arnold Bennett, the famous English novelist, talks about how some feel when they are engaged or married. They realize that they have hurried human beings instead of divine goddesses, Bennett says.

DON'T NEGLECT KIDNEYS

Swamp-Root, Dr. Kilmer's Prescription, Overcomes Kidney Trouble. It is now conceded by physicians that the kidneys should have more attention as they control the other organs to a remarkable degree and do a tremendous amount of work in removing the poisons and waste matter from the system by filtering the blood.

CHIN CHATTER

"When you get to talking," said his wife's husband, "can't get a word in edgeways." "Hugh!" rejoined her husband's wife, "at your age you should know better than to try such a foolish stunt."

MOTOR CAR DEFINED

A motor car is really a self-running and rather realistic moving picture machine. The difference is that real hills are better than play ones, in one's own home, to some panoramic sort of pleasure except that, instead of sitting in a row of ten cent seats with a great mass of people in the jerky and creaky dark, one sits securely and privately in one's own moving picture machine and does everything one's self. One steers the wheels and the lever and turns the scenery on and off.

GOOD REASON

"Marin, you'll never be able to drive that nail with a flat-iron. For heaven's sakes use your head," admonished Mr. Stuckins, and then he wondered why she would not speak to him the rest of the day.—Tuck.

FOR PRESERVING FISH

A method for freezing fish, patented in Denmark by immersing them in a cold liquid, is claimed to preserve them in more perfect condition than air freezing, as the flesh is not dried out broken by ice crystals.

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Shortening Bird Season. Pennsylvania is the latest of the states to take up the question of shorter open seasons on game birds, and good reasons for curbing the activities of hunters are stated in a statement of the game commission now being sent to individuals and sporting associations.

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