

# The Destroying Angel

By Louis Joseph Vance

Author of "The Pool of Flame," "The Bronze Bell," "The Black Bag," "The Brass Bowl."

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## SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I**—Told by three doctors that he has but six months to live Hugh Whitaker returns to his club to find that his affianced has killed him. His friend Peter Stark persuades him to plan a South sea cruise.

**CHAPTER II**—Whitaker runs away from Peter and registers in an obscure hotel as Hugh Morton. He is shown by mistake to the room of Mary Ladislas, who has run away with and been deserted by a chauffeur named Morton. Whitaker prevents Mary's suicide.

**CHAPTER III**—Whitaker marries the girl, provides for her financial future and sends her back to New York. Peter finds him at the railway station.

**CHAPTER IV**—Peter and Whitaker go to the South seas where Whitaker recovers from his malady. The yacht, with Peter and all hands, is lost at sea while Whitaker, who is supposed to have gone down with the vessel, is ashore. He becomes wealthy under the name of Morton and six years later goes home to New York and meets his former partner, Drummond, who is supposed to be married to a wealthy actress, Sara Law, and also meets Sara, Sara's theatrical manager.

**CHAPTER V**—At the theater Whitaker discovers in Sara Law the Mary Ladislas whom he married six years before.

**CHAPTER VI**—While Whitaker is trying to get an interview with his wife he hears of Drummond's suicide.

**CHAPTER VII**—Martin Ember, retired detective, calls on Whitaker and tells him Sara Law's strange history. She is called "The Destroying Angel," because before Drummond's suicide three men had loved her—and one by one they died. Ember thinks Drummond still alive.

**CHAPTER VIII**—Whitaker's wife by letter proposes divorce. Drummond's accounts show that he has stolen the estate left by Sara Law to his wife. When he left New York an attempt by an unknown to murder Whitaker is made.

**CHAPTER IX**—Ember takes Whitaker down to his seaside bungalow and reveals to him the truth. Whitaker chases a night prowler.

**CHAPTER X**—He fights a man for spying on a woman who he suspects to be a Miss Fiske, and suffering from a twisted ankle, is helped to Ember's home by her.

[Continued]

He eyed her instance. There was in this incredible situation a certain piety, definitely provocative, transcending the claims his injury made upon his interest. Last night for the first time he had seen this woman, and from a distance had thought her desirable; now, within twelve hours, he found himself with an arm round her neck!

And then suddenly she turned her head and intercepted his whole-hearted stare. For a thought wonder glimmered in the violet eyes; then they flashed disconcertingly; finally they became utterly cold and disdainful.

"Well?" she demanded in a frigid voice.

He looked away in complete confusion, and felt his face burning to the temples.

"I beg your pardon," he mumbled unhappily.

He essayed to walk. Twenty feet and more of treacherous, dry, yielding sand separated them from the flight of steps that ascended the bluff. It proved no easy journey.

The stairway accomplished, he limped to a wooden seat and sat down with much grim decision in his manner. But he mastered a smile to meet her look of concern, and shook his head.

"Thus far and no farther."

"Oh, but you must not be stubborn!" "I mean to be—horrid stubborn. In fact, I don't mind warning you that there's a famous strain of mule in the Whitaker make-up."

She was, however, not to be diverted; and her fugitive frown bespoke impatience, if he were any judge.

"What I wished to convey was simply my intention no longer to bear my masculine weight upon a woman—either you or any other woman."

A smile contended momentarily with the frown, and triumphed brilliantly.

"I mean to ask you," he said deliberately, "to whom am I indebted?"

To his consternation the smile vanished, as though a cloud had sailed before the sun. Doubt and something strongly resembling incredulity informed her glance.

"Do you mean to say you don't know?" she demanded after a moment. "Surely Mr. Ember must have told you?"

"Ember seemed to be laboring under the misapprehension that the Fiske place was without a tenant."

"Oh!" Her tone was thoughtful. "Has he gone back to town?"

"Business called him. At least such was the plausible excuse he advanced for depriving himself of my exclusive society."

"I see," she nodded. "I see . . . But aren't you going to tell me? Or ought I to prove my human intelligence by assuming on logical grounds that you're Miss Fiske?"

"If you please," she murmured, her intent gaze seeking the distances of the sea.

very decent sort of a world after all?" "And still"—she returned to the charge—"you haven't told me what you mean to do, since you refuse my help."

"I mean," he asserted cheerfully, "to sit here until some kind-hearted person fetches me a stick to serve as emergency staff. Then I shall make shift to hobble to your motor boat and thank you very kindly for ferrying me home."

She shook her head in dainty annoyance, then, light-footed, darted from sight round the side of the bathhouse. Presently she reappeared, dragging an eight-foot pole. He rose on one foot and tested the staff with his weight. "I'll do," he decided. "And thank you very much."

But even with its aid, his progress toward the boat necessarily consumed a tedious time. It was impossible to favor the injured foot to any great extent. He made little or no attempt to converse while in motion, so she had plenty of opportunity to make up her mind about him.

If her eyes were a reliable index, she found him at least interesting. At times their expression was enigmatic beyond any reading. Again they



He Rose on One Foot and Tested the Staff.

seemed openly perplexed. At all times they were warily respectful. Once she signed quietly with a passing look of sadness of which he was wholly unaware.

"Odd—about that fellow," he observed during a halt. "I was sure he was Drummond—until I saw—"

"Drummond?"

"Friend of mine . . . You don't by any chance know Drummond, do you?"

"I've heard the name."

"You must have. Supposed to have committed suicide—jumped off Washington bridge a week before he was to marry Sara Law, the actress? . . . I may as well tell you—it's no secret, although only a few people know it—Ember saw Drummond, or thinks he did, alive, in the flesh, a good half-hour after the time of his reported suicide."

"How very curious!" There was nothing more than civil but perfunctory interest in the comment. "Are you ready to go on?"

And another time, when they were near the boat:

"When do you expect Mr. Ember?" asked the girl.

"Tonight, probably."

"I shall be glad to see him," said the girl in what Whitaker thought a curious tone. "Please tell him, will you? Don't forget."

"If that's the way you feel about him, I shall be tempted to wire him not to come."

"Absurd!" she laughed.

When finally they came to the end of the dock, he paused, considering the three-foot drop to the deck of the motor boat. "If it weren't low tide . . ." he explained, crestfallen.

"But, since it is low tide, you'll have to let me help you again," the girl retorted, jumping lightly but surely to the cockpit.

She turned and offered him a hand, eyes dancing with gay malice.

"Like all men, you must turn to a woman in the end—however brave your strut."

"Oh, it's that way, is it? Thank you, but I fancy I can manage."

And with the aid of the clothes-prop he did manage to make the descent without her hand and without disaster.

The girl started the engine and took the wheel as the boat swung droning away from the dock. Not until she had once or twice advanced the spark and made other minor adjustments did she return attention to her passenger.

Then, in a casual voice, she inquired: "You've been out of the country for some time, I think you said?"

"Almost six years on the other side of the world—got back only this spring."

"What," she asked, eyes averted, spying out the channel—"what does one do on the other side of the world?"

"This one knocked about, mostly, for his health's sake. I did drift into a sort of business, after a bit—gold mining in a haphazard, happy-go-lucky fashion—did pretty well at it and came home to astonish the natives."

"You find things—New York—disappointing?" she analyzed his tone.

at the dock; and all the people I used to know are either married and devoted to brats, or divorced and devoted to bridge; and my game has gone off so badly in six years that I don't be long any more."

She smiled, shaping her scarlet lips deliciously. The soft, warm wind whipped stray strands of hair, like coral of gold, about her face. Her eyelids were half lowered against the intolerable splendor of the day. The waters of the bay, wind-blurred and dark, seemed a shield of sapphire fashioned by nature solely to set off in clear relief her ardent lowliness.

Whitaker, noting how swiftly the mainland shores were disclosing the finer details of their beauty, could have wished the bay ten times as wide.

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Mousetrap.

Late in the afternoon of the same day, Ember, appearing suddenly in front of the bungalow, discovered Whitaker sitting up in state; a comfortable wicker chair supported his body and a canvas-seated camp stool one of his feet; which last was discreetly veiled in a dripping bath towel. Otherwise he was fastidiously arrayed in white flannels and, by his seraphic smile and guileless expression, seemed abnormally at peace with his circumstances.

Haiting, Ember surveyed the spectacle with mocking disfavor. "Hello!" he observed, beginning to draw off his gaiters as he ascended the veranda steps and dropped into another wicker chair. "What the deuce's the matter with you?"

"Game leg, thanks. Twisted my ankle again, this morning. Sum Fat has been doctoring it with intense enthusiasm, horse liniment and chopped ice. By tomorrow morning I'll be skipping like the silly old hills in the Scriptures."

"Hope so. Well, you must've had a pretty rotten stupid time of it, with that storm."

"Oh, not at all. I really enjoyed it," Whitaker protested.

"Oh, if you forgive me for leaving you alone so much, we'll call it square." Ember lifted his voice: "Sum Fat, ahoy!"

The Chinaman appeared in the doorway, as suddenly and silently as if magically materialized by the sound of his name.

"You're a sulphur-colored wizard with pigeon-toed eyes," said Ember severely. "Go away from here instantly and prepare me all the dinner in the establishment, lest an evil fate overtake you."

"It is written," returned Sum Fat, "that I die after eight-seven years of honorable life, from heart failure on receiving long-deferred raise in wages."

He shuffled off, chuckling.

"I fancied I saw the flutter of a petticoat through the trees, as I came up to the house."

"Acquaintance of yours, I believe—Miss Fiske?"

"Miss Fiske?" There was unfeigned amazement in the echo.

"Anything wonderful about that?" inquired Whitaker, sharply. "I fancied from what she said that you two were rather good friends."

"Just surprised—that's all," said Ember, recovering. "You see, I didn't think the Fiske place was open this year."

He stared suspiciously at Whitaker, but the latter was transparently ingenuous.

"She expressed an unaccountable desire to see you—told me to tell you."

"Oh? Such being the case, one would think she might've waited."

"She had just started home when you drove in," Whitaker explained with elaborate ease. "She'd merely run over for a moment to inquire after my ankle, and couldn't wait, I say, who are the Fiskes, anyway?"

"Well . . . the Fiskes are the people who own the next cottage."

"I know, but—"

"Oh, I never troubled to inquire; have a hazy notion Fiske does something in Wall street." Ember passed smoothly over this flaw in his professional omniscience. "How did you happen to meet her?"

"Oh, mere accident. Over on the beach this morning. I slipped and hurt my ankle. She—ah—happened along and brought me home in her motor boat."

"You haven't seen Drummond—or any signs of him, have you?"

"Eh—what?" Whitaker sat up, startled. "No, I . . . er . . . how should I?"

"I merely wondered. You see, I . . . Well, to tell the truth, I took the liberty of camping on his trail, while in town. But I couldn't find any trace of him."

"Oh, I say!" Whitaker expostulated, touched by this evidence of disinterested thoughtfulness. "You persuade yourself too much, old man. You set up an inference and idolize it as an immortal truth. Why, you had me going for a while. Only last night there was a fellow skulking round here, and I was just dippy enough, thanks to your influence, to think he resembled Drummond. But this morning I got a good look at him, and he's no more Drummond than you are."

Ember sat up, eyes snapping. "Who was he, then? Tell me about him—everything."

Whitaker resignedly delivered himself of the tale of the mare's-nest—as he still regarded it. When he had come to the lame conclusion thereof, Ember yawned and rose.

(To Be Continued)

Feel languid, weak, run down? Head-ache? Stomach "off"? A good remedy is Burdock Blood Bitters. Ask your druggist. Price \$1.00.—adv.

## HELP FOR WORKING WOMEN

### Some Have to Keep on Until They Almost Drop. How Mrs. Conley Got Help.

Here is a letter from a woman who had to work, but was too weak and suffered too much to continue. How she regained health:—

Frankfort, Ky.—"I suffered so much with female weakness that I could not do my own work, had to hire it done. I heard so much about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound that I tried it. I took three bottles and I found it to be all my claim. Now I feel as well as ever I did and am able to do all my own work again. I recommend it to any woman suffering from female weakness. You may publish my letter if you wish."—Mrs. JAMES CONLEY, 516 St. Clair St., Frankfort, Ky.

No woman suffering from any form of female troubles should lose hope until she has given Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a fair trial.

This famous remedy, the medicinal ingredients of which are derived from native roots and herbs, has for forty years proved to be a most valuable tonic and invigorator of the female organism.

All women are invited to write to the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., for special advice.—It will be confidential.

## IF ELECTION WERE OVER?

While Democrats Are Admittedly the Champion Question Fiends, it is Believed This Quiz is as Unanswerable as Their Most Childlike Effort.

If election day were passed would President Wilson make so little of the principle of arbitration in industrial disputes? Would he be so sure that it is more important to preserve peace, when a great strike is threatened, than it is to make judicial methods rather than force the means of settling differences between capital and labor?

If election day had come and gone would Mr. Wilson keep the national guardsmen of the country in camp on the ground that they may be needed to protect the United States against Mexico? Would there be months of inaction and indecision in which no use is made of a large body of citizen soldiers? Would they not be allowed to go home or else be set in motion to make Mexico safe a neighbor as the Administration seems to think that it is already?

If election day were past would the President drive through Congress a bill like the shipping bill which is intended to embark the federal government upon a new venture in a hazardous field and use \$50,000,000 of the people's money to buy tonnage held above its normal value or else so owned that it cannot be used without peril of international complications? Is sound public policy behind such a measure or only campaign politics?

If election day were not to be considered would Woodrow Wilson use so many high and mighty words in international notes and do so little to make them mean anything practical? Would his deeds lag so far behind his phrases?—Cleveland Leader.

## "HE DIDN'T DO RIGHT."

Independent Voters Turning This Conviction Over and Over In Their Minds And Will Cost Mr. Wilson Many A Vote.

A Democrat who never voted for a Republican candidate for President except in 1872, when he was forced by the lack of a Democratic nominee to cast his ballot for Horace Greeley, says: "I expect to vote for Woodrow Wilson, but I don't like his course in the railroad dispute. He didn't do right."

The railroad controversy has introduced a moral issue into the campaign. Mr. Wilson sacrificed principle to expediency, or what he judges to be expediency, when he tamely surrendered to the demands of the train-service brothhoods.

He put his own personal and party need before the public good. He angled for votes. He aimed a body blow at the tried and tested arbitration method of settling differences. "God help you, I cannot," he is said to have exclaimed to the railroad managers, who do not poll as many votes as their employees. But he could have helped them if he had stood impartially between them and the utterly reckless train-service representatives who were bent on their rule-or-ruin programme.

"He didn't do right." The consciousness of that fact is sinking deep into the American mind.

"He didn't do right." That widespread conviction will cost him thousands of votes on election day.

"He didn't do right." He preferred the weak, the timid attitude of the born compromiser.

The American people like courage. They like convictions. They like a man who has the courage of his convictions. They like a man who is willing to risk consequences for the sake of a just cause.

It was an unjust cause in which Woodrow Wilson enlisted when he accepted the brotherhood view that the chief item in their demands could not be arbitrated.—Providence Journal.

"President Wilson settled himself in his chair."—News item. Well, he has settled something, anyhow.

## WILSON STRIKES WHEN THE IRON IS COLD

President Wilson refused to speak in Independence Hall on the one hundred and twenty-eighth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in that hall, and he so refused because inasmuch as over one hundred of our men, women and children had just been murdered on the high seas he regarded it as "the very moment when he would not care to arouse the sentiment of patriotism." Mr. Wilson has a positive genius for striking when the iron is cold and fearing to strike when the iron is hot. If one hundred and twenty-eight years ago Washington and Jefferson, and the other men who signed the Declaration of Independence had felt the same way about patriotism, and the same way about fighting as Mr. Wilson does, we would never have had a country. Had Lincoln felt the same way, there would be no such thing as an American Republic now in existence.—From the Speech of Colonel Roosevelt at Battle Creek, Michigan, in Behalf of Mr. Hughes.

This paper sells on its merits; no voting contests necessary.

## WHO IS THE REAL FRIEND OF LABOR?

### What Wilson Said About Unions and Workmen When He Did Not Want Their Votes.

I am a fierce partisan of the open shop and of everything that makes for individual liberty.—Speech at Open Shop Banquet, Jan. 12, 1909.

The labor unions reward the shysters and incompetent at the expense of the able and industrious.—Speech People's Forum, New Rochelle, Feb. 25, 1905.

We speak too exclusively of the capitalist class. There is another as formidable an enemy to equality and freedom of opportunity as it is and that is the class formed by the labor organizations and leaders of this country.—Speech, Waldorf Hotel, New York, March 16, 1907.

You know what the usual standard of the employe is in our day. It is to give as little as he may for his wages. Labor is standardized by the trade unions, and this is the standard to which it is made to conform. No one is suffered to do more than the average workman can do.—Address to Graduating Class, Princeton University, June 3, 1909.

The objections I have to labor unions is that they drag the highest man to the level of the lowest. I must demur with the labor unions when they say "you must award the dull the same as you award those with special gifts."—Speech in People's Forum, New Rochelle, Feb. 25, 1905.

The Chinese were more to be desired as workmen, if not as citizens, than the coarse crew that came crowding in every year at Eastern ports.—History of American People.

The Wilson Keynote. In his kneeling to the demands of the trainmen, in his sacrifice of the sacred principle of arbitration on the altar of peace-at-any-price, we see, in review, the whole philosophy of the Wilson theory of government and nationality. "It is better to run than to fight." That theory is at work in American government today for the first time.—Boston Journal.

The Wilson Waltz. In view of recent events the following formula overheard on a hotel veranda may be of interest: The Wilson waltz, one step forward, three steps backward, hesitate, then sidestep.

The Administration is depressed by the reflection that under no circumstances can it postpone election day.

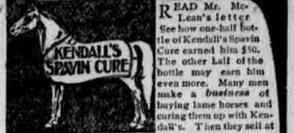
Wilson insists that he will never recognize government by assassination, but he hasn't cut off relations with those who have assassinated Americans.

The first President and the first Congress that ever submitted to a hold-up.

And, by the way, nobody will ever be able to claim this was a regular Democratic Administration unless we have a bond issue before March 4, 1917.

Betting on Hughes and Wilson is dangerous both to Democrats and Republicans. In one of the New England states such a bet was made a few days ago. The officers heard of it, and they arrested the Republican on a charge of robbery and sent the Democrat to an insane asylum. Be careful.

## One Half Bottle Earned Him \$50



How about YOUR horse? Why not get a bottle of Kendall's Spavin Cure and be ready to cure cases of Curb, Spavin, Splint, Ringbone, Bony Growth or Lameness. It cures all these or other causes. Thousands of other Farmers and Owners of Horses have done it for over 35 years. It's the old reliable remedy you can depend on. Get a bottle at once and know much it will save for you. Ask your druggist for a bottle of Kendall's Spavin Cure. It's the only one that's been proved to cure Spavin, Curb, Splint, Ringbone, Bony Growth, Lameness, etc. etc. etc. DR. R. J. KENDALL COMPANY, Enosburg Falls, Vermont.

The president "will not take the stump," but "will accept invitations to speak at different places." Chairman Vance McCormick is as Machiavellian as a musk-melon.

It is not what Wilson has kept us out of but what he's got us into that counts at present.

### What Hughes Said About Unions and Workmen.

There are some who regard organized labor as a source of strife and menace of difficulty. I regard it as a fine opportunity for the amelioration of the condition of men working with no other purpose than to make the most of themselves and to achieve something for their families.—Speech at Dedication of Tuberculosis Pavilion, Albany, New York, Aug. 29, 1908.

The mission of labor organizations is one of the finest that any association of men could guard. Today we have a realization of what can be accomplished.—Speech at Dedication of Tuberculosis Pavilion, Aug. 29, 1908.

It is a shocking thought that the wage earners of the country, who by their daily toil make possible the industrial prestige of which we boast, should be subjected through ignorance or indifference to unnecessary peril. The interests of labor are the interests of all the people, and the protection of the wage earner in the security of his life and health by every practical means is one of the most sacred trusts of society.—Speech Exposition of Safety Devices and Industrial Hygiene, Jan. 28, 1907.

I believe in a six-day working week. So do you. But do you know that the men who are making a six-day week a possibility and an eventual fixture, are these men (labor representatives) and their associates? I long ago came to the conclusion that the labor unions are going to solve the Sunday labor question to the best interest of the country. Join hands with them and you will double your results, while halving your labor.—Address to Preachers and Labor Representatives in Executive Chamber, Albany, 1908.

One thing we must all admit—the President is never too proud to sidestep.

A surplus of \$5,200,000 from the postal service during the fiscal year ending June 30 is reported by Postmaster-General Burleson. With the department more than paying expenses, it would seem that the executive officials could afford to keep on the payroll members of the National Guard who responded when the President called out the Organized Militia for duty on the border.

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