

**THE LITTLE ANGEL,  
AND  
OTHER STORIES**

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The little angel, and other stories by L. N. Andreyev

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**L. N. ANDREYEV**

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AND  
OTHER STORIES**



THE  
LITTLE ANGEL  
AND OTHER STORIES

TRANSLATED FROM  
THE RUSSIAN OF  
*L. N. ANDREYEV*

BY  
W. H. LOWE



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## PREFACE

LEONID NIKOLAIVICH ANDREYEV was born in Orel in 1871. After his father's death he was thrown upon his own resources, but managed to study at both Petrograd and Moscow Universities, graduating in Law in 1897. During this period he endured great hardship—often even actual hunger—and was the victim of deep melancholia. His first writings were unsuccessful; and, for a time, he devoted himself to painting. Later he came into touch with the Russian press as police-court reporter for a leading newspaper.

Then *Silence* was published, and brought him immediate recognition. This terrible story may serve as an example of his method. The silence of the frightened girl, dying with her secret, and of her mother, stricken, through shock, with paralysis, crushes the pride of

the priest whose training has so stiffened his nature that he cannot express or welcome affection. He cries for help ; he entreats them to show him pity. His daughter lies dead ; his wife motionless. An abstract idea is the germ of each tale ; around it are woven both characters and incident—a process which is in marked contrast to the work of his contemporary Maxim Gorky whose people with their actions come directly from life—mostly, indeed, from his own personal experiences. Sometimes the double note is tragic ; oftener, the abstract idea redeems the gloom or horror of the actual tale, as in *The Little Angel* and *In the Basement*, for, while the stories of Andreyev are tinged with more than even the ordinary tone of sadness of the Russian writer, there seems to be in his mind a balancing, a search for some kind of compensation, as though he would say, 'No man is wholly good or wholly bad.' Perhaps it is the weakness of a method by which his characters become the puppets—however real—illustrating an idea ; perhaps it is the strength



of the author's vision, that makes his people sometimes morbid and unhealthy. They are driven by a relentless creator, as in Masefield's *Nan*, to their destiny. Nevertheless, the beauty of his style, the clear imagination, and the perfect form of his stories come not only from an artist but from a philosopher and poet. His work is not for babes. Deep truths are presented not more realistically in the anomalies and terrors of life than in the symbolism of his short stories and, in its more elaborate form, of his plays. Touches of tenderness, beauty, and sympathetic insight are found on every page side by side with brutality and coarseness, for Andreyev draws Life without hiding, without shirking. But, beyond and behind, his mind is working ceaselessly, struggling to co-ordinate the whole.

His works comprise a large number of stories, including beside the present collection *Judas Iscariot*, *The Red Laugh*, *The Seven Who were Hanged*, and some powerful studies in madness; and of plays most of which

are performed upon the Russian, though, not yet upon the English, stage. Among the latter are *The Life of Man*, *Anathema*, *The Black Maskers*, *The Sabine Women*, and *The Tragedy of Belgium*.

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