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| Andreev, Leonid Nikolaevich (1871-1919) |
| (АНДРЕЕВ, ЛЕОНИД НИКОЛАЕВИЧ) |
| Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev was a prolific Russian author, widely popular in the first decade of the 20th century, whose fictional and dramatic works spanned the divide between realism and symbolism.  Andreev was born in Orel, a provincial capital south of Moscow, and died in Finland. He studied law in St. Petersburg and Moscow. After a brief and unsuccessful legal career, he worked as a journalist, prose writer and dramatist, quickly making a name for himself as a successful short story writer once his stories began to appear in newspapers. His first published volume of stories (1901) was an immediate success, with its first two printings selling out in two weeks. He turned to playwriting five years later, although he continued to write short stories until late in life. Andreev’s creative work sparked much debate from both realist and symbolist writers. He developed a close friendship with realist writer Maxim Gorky, although the two grew to disagree on questions of literary style and politics, as Andreev’s work strayed from its early realist tendencies and revolutionary ideals. Gorky mentored Andreev in his early career and spearheaded a collection of literary reminiscences by famous writers upon the latter’s death. Andreev’s popularity waned, along with his health, during the final decade of his life. |
| Leonid Nikolaevich Andreev was a prolific Russian author, widely popular in the first decade of the 20th century, whose fictional and dramatic works spanned the divide between realism and symbolism.  Andreev was born in Orel, a provincial capital south of Moscow, and died in Finland. He studied law in St. Petersburg and Moscow. After a brief and unsuccessful legal career, he worked as a journalist, prose writer and dramatist, quickly making a name for himself as a successful short story writer once his stories began to appear in newspapers. His first published volume of stories (1901) was an immediate success, with its first two printings selling out in two weeks. He turned to playwriting five years later, although he continued to write short stories until late in life. Andreev’s creative work sparked much debate from both realist and symbolist writers. He developed a close friendship with realist writer Maxim Gorky, although the two grew to disagree on questions of literary style and politics, as Andreev’s work strayed from its early realist tendencies and revolutionary ideals. Gorky mentored Andreev in his early career and spearheaded a collection of literary reminiscences by famous writers upon the latter’s death. Andreev’s popularity waned, along with his health, during the final decade of his life. Major Works: Stories  ‘Bezdna’ [‘The Abyss’] (1902).  -- Considered to be a response to Lev Tolstoi’s *Kreutzer Sonata*, this story deals with violent sexual impulses and depicts an adolescent who rapes his girlfriend. It was widely discussed in its time due to its controversial subject matter.  ‘ V tumane’ [‘In the Fog’] (1902).  -- Along with ‘The Abyss,’ this story made a name for Andreev as a controversial writer. In this story, a young man wanders through the fog of city streets, eventually killing a prostitute and himself after an encounter.  ‘Krasnyi smekh’ [‘Red Laugh’] (1904).  --Written after the outbreak of WWI, this story was experimental in form, and intended to convey a sense of the psychological damage wrought by war.  ‘Rasskaz o semi poveshennykh’ [‘The Story of Seven Who Were Hanged’] (1908).  -- Considered Andreev’s finest story, this work portrays the inhumanity of the death penalty. It was translated into multiple languages and had sold 100,000 copies by 1911. Plays *Zhizn’ cheloveka* [*Life of Man*] (1906).  -- Allegoric play in five ‘pictures,’ each representing a different stage in a man’s life, from birth to death. Notably, both Vsevolod Meyerhold (St. Petersburg) and Konstantin Stanislavsky (Moscow) produced this play in 1907.    *Tot, kto poluchaet poshchechiny* [*He Who Gets Slapped*] (1916).  -- Andreev’s most widely known play outside of Russia, this complex play is set in a circus following the arrival of a mysterious newcomer. The play blends social polemic with mythical overtones. |
| Further reading:  (Davies)  (Hutchings)  (Kaun)  (Newcombe)  (White)  (Woodward) |