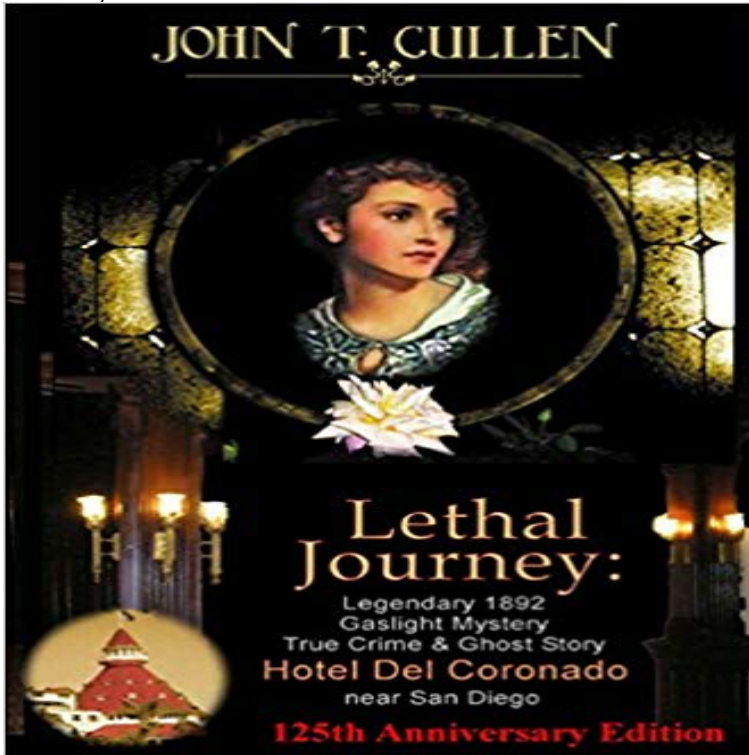


## Lethal Journey: Legendary 1892 Gaslight Mystery: True Crime & Ghost Story at the Hotel del Coronado near San Diego



John T. Cullen's novel *Lethal Journey* - Victorian gaslight noir - is closely based on the 1892 true crime at the Hotel Del Coronado near San Diego. This fast, atmospheric thriller combines the best elements of legend and true history. For granular detail, read the author's painstaking, scholarly analysis in the nonfiction book *Dead Move: Kate Morgan and the Haunting Mystery of Coronado*. His careful analysis ties all loose ends together, in the first-ever plausible explanation of this San Diego legend. He solves an old, brittle cold case, dispelling 1890s cover-up legends planted to protect John Spreckels - owner of the hotel, and one of the nation's wealthiest men in 1892. The Beautiful Stranger - as the young mystery woman is officially remembered - was poised, striking, and doomed. She died violently and mysteriously at Spreckels' new Hotel del Coronado, a resort by the Pacific Ocean. The true crime mystery instantly became a national sensation, leading to a famous ghost who allegedly haunts the U.S. National Landmark hotel to this day. Cullen's three books are not based on ghosts or the supernatural - only true history, hidden in plain sight until now under a successful cover-up. The Yellow Press fanned flames and rumors of her alleged dalliances with men in high places - none of it true. She was part accomplice, part victim, in an ill-conceived blackmail attempt that went horribly wrong. The target was resort owner John Spreckels, a son of Sugar Baron Claus Spreckels of San Francisco. Iowa grifter Kate Morgan tried to use the young woman's out-of-wedlock pregnancy as a threat on Spreckels' public image at a critical moment. Spreckels had nothing to do with the pregnancy. He was in the White House, desperately conferring with family friend President Benjamin Harrison to save the Hawaiian monarchy and Spreckels' sugar plantations in Hawaii. Under a false name (Lottie A. Bernard),

the Beautiful Stranger checked into the Hotel del Coronado on Thanksgiving Day 1892. She carried herself like a young stage star. Five days later, she lay dead on a stairwell from a gunshot to the head, a large revolver by her side. Despite Spreckels and Harrisons efforts, the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown six weeks later (January 1893). The Spreckels dynasty lost their sugar plantations, but established a new sugar beet empire in the town of Spreckels, near Monterey, California. Poor Lizzie Wyllie, the dead beauty - swallowed up in falsehoods, forgotten - was thrown in an unmarked grave outside San Diego. Lethal Journey (novel) dramatizes her true, tragic path. She was the victim of a repressive Victorian society, in which women were not allowed to vote, travel alone, or own property. She was young, pregnant, alone, and desperate. She broke the rules to survive, but fell into the clutches of an unscrupulous, fatally false friend (Kate Morgan) who also stole her lover. Lizzie ended up used, broken, and hopeless. On a dark and stormy night (literally) in November 1892, she shot herself while weakened and depressed on drugs Kate gave her to induce a spectacular miscarriage in the lobby of Spreckels hotel - unless the tycoon paid up. Lizzie, a beautiful young run-away shop girl from Detroit, had pretensions of becoming a great stage actress, but fell victim to her own frailties and cruel Victorian morals. In death, she was embalmed, dolled up like a princess, and morbidly displayed in a store window for thousands to admire. She embodied of that morbid, powerful Victorian fantasy, the Fallen Angel. The Beautiful Stranger remains today an object lesson for womens rights, and the tragic story of a naive soul. This is the stand-alone edition of Lethal Journey (thriller). Also available from Clocktower Books: the stand-alone edition of Dead Move (nonfiction; factual analysis). Or read \*Coronado Mystery\* - both books in one volume. All editions print or ebook, 125th Anniversary editions for 2017.

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