

"THE GOLDEN BED"

By WALLACE IRWIN.

Produced as a Paramount Picture by Cecil B. DeMille From a Screen Adaptation by Jennie Macpherson. (Copyright, 1924.)

(Continued from Yesterday.)

"... Poppa—I didn't mean that. I didn't mean..."

"Get outa here. Out. Out! I never told you to come home. Take yer racket and get outa here!"

"But Poppa..."

"Out! You don't belong in the same house with decent people. You spoil the air..."

"Ott! Ott! It was Mrs. Stek's voice, ringing painfully above the scared babble."

There was a shuffling of feet, bumping of furniture, banging of doors—then the fall of broken glass on the front porch. Admah had got into his trousers and run around to the street just in time to witness the final curtain. A hack with a negro driver and a bare-boned horse stood under the gaslight. A woman had just banged the door and her frightened, tear-stained face was visible in the dark square of window. The colored man on the box, panic struck by the violent nature of his errand, cut his horse sharply across its flank. The hack lurched crazily away over crooked stones.

On the little nubby steps stood Pa Stek, half-clad, red-eyed, tousle-haired—a lion gone mad.

"Go and stay! Stay, d'you hear? You want money and it's all you think about. Go get it the only way you know how."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

The rebuke came like a spurt of vinegar from the mouth of Ma Holtz, brought to her door by the noise.

"Ought to be ashamed? I ought to be dead!" Pa Stek said it with a hollow groan, his red eyes rolling as he turned and lurched into the house.

"Y' see, Ad," said Ma Holtz half an hour later as she sat in the kitchen—her nerves were so disturbed that she had made a cup of coffee—"y' see what comes of book-learnin' beyond what the Good Book teaches us. Poor Stek's been alavin' like a nigger to learn her chapters out o' the Black Bible. Eddycation! Gosh!"

But after she had gone to bed Admah lay on his scalding pillow and was ashamed of his tears. What he

had felt for Mabel was too green an emotion to be dignified by the name of Love. Yet what was it? It was that pure and touching thing which only young boys can give to women. Instinct with mature desires.

Half the night he raged at the brutality of Stek, bawling his shame for all the world to hear. And he had called Mabel a name—a name so low that even the men at the carbarns apologized for it. Then he remembered the eyes of the stricken man as he turned to Ma and delivered sentence on himself. He ought to be dead. What was Admah's duty in this case? He thought once of stealing to the table drawer and taking out his mother's long carving knife.

But next morning he went downtown with his usual candy basket. Practical daylight thoughts were in his head. After all, he reflected, Mabel had lost most of her charm for him that evening at Macmurray's Theater. Above all he was amazed by the princely ease with which this Somebody had turned out his yellowed hand and beckoned Mabel away. Money. The man who drove the racers and sat in the box with such people as the Peakes must have had piles of it at his command. And yet Mabel herself once argued that you have to be a Swell to do as you like in this world...

Admah had now turned fifteen and was getting too old to handle a candy basket and run errands like a little boy.

Sally Livingstone Peake died of typhoid fever in her thirty-third year. Her will was opened in the offices of Marlowe Livingstone, her uncle, and whatever surprise it caused was anticlimactic. It was popularly supposed that she had brought something substantial to the Peake estate. If so, it had been absorbed into the larger body, leaving no trace.

One afternoon the sisters, their pale young skins and fair hair accentuated by little gowns of mourning black, were summoned by old Harris, the houseman, who seemed to carry a weight of mystery under the wool which fitted him like a gray skull cap.

"Miss Margaret an' Miss Flo Lee," he began ceremoniously, "Ole Miss wish to see you all in hah room."

"What do she want, Harris?" asked Margaret, impressed; for Grandmother Peake, old invalid that she was, usually held court at tea time.

"Ah dunno, Miss Margaret," admitted old Harris. "But Ah reckon it's referin' to de Will."

Flora Lee brightened at once and went bounding up the stairs, but Margaret followed on leathery feet.

She found Grandmother Peake seated in a wheel chair in the room whose walls had bounded her physical world for seven years.

"Margaret, my dear," said the old lady, reaching out a long arm and encircling her favorite granddaughter, "you're looking pale. You must be getting out."

"I am," said Margaret, kissing the grand old lady on her wide brow.

"Daddy, come in this minute!" Flora Lee was demanding from the next room. "Grandma's going to tell us about the Will."

Grandmother Peake's fine eyes rolled with a look of annoyance as the sprightly little sister appeared at the door, pulling her father after her. Garnett Peake's sullen face was lightened by a look of amusement; he regarded Flora Lee with a faint approximation of pleasure. Just then Judge Peake came from the corridor, blinking like a handsome old owl—a noble Roman owl with a finely curved beak and a crown of silvery rings.

"I thought I might tell the children now," said the old lady, looking up at the Judge as if for an endorsement.

"Yes, Yes." This came absent-mindedly.

With an air of bored detachment he crossed the room and divided the shutters to look across the street.

"Garnett, what's all this noise late-ly?" he asked his son, making it plain that Garnett was in some way responsible.

"They're tearing down the Temple house," explained Garnett, shuffling over to share the view.

"What's wrong with the Temple house?" asked the old gentleman, staring.

"Your brother-in-law sold the property," said Garnett with a sarcastic smile. "Maybe you haven't been following the real estate news."

"Why should I?" The Judge regarded his son with a withering scowl. "What sort of house are they putting up here?"

"A United Brotherhood Lodge Hall, I believe that's the complete name."

"You're talking nonsense. Such a thing as that—on Inness Street? This is a residence section, sir."

"It was," admitted Garnett and continued to stare out the window.

THE NEBBES



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess (Copyright 1924)

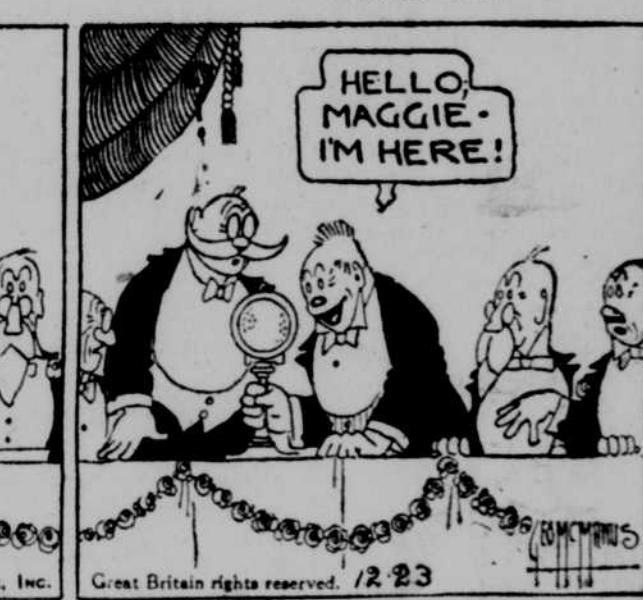
IT WAS EVER THUS.

Barney Google and Spark Plug



BARNEY'S GLAD HIS BET WASN'T TAKEN. Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck (Copyright 1924)

BRINGING UP FATHER



Registered U. S. Patent Office SEE JIGGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus (Copyright 1924)

JERRY ON THE JOB



SPEAKING RIGHT UP. Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban (Copyright 1924)

Real Folks at Home (The Floor Walker)



By Briggs ABIE THE AGENT Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield (Copyright 1924)

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, Dec. 22.—Another cluster of midnight clubs is opening in the Frantic Forties. When a dozen or more were padlocked wise men of Broadway declared this was the end and ducked to the intimate candle light cellars of cheer.

Manhattan's reform comes in spasms. Those who know say that a political expediency caused the closing of the biggest chain in town a year ago. Despite the flagrant violations there was not an indictment against the men who ruled the night world.

After resting awhile—along the Riviera and at Monte Carlo, by the way—they are now back at the old stand and in the past month a dozen modern and ornate establishments have opened to those who go in for high life.

The only change is they are now nameless. No electric signs flaunt this club and that. Instead they are known merely by their street numbers. They are manipulated by a board of dummy directors which may include water and bus boys.

The fact that they may be closed at any moment does not prevent lavish decorations. It is said if they can remain open a month and do a rushing business they make a huge profit on their investment. One man is said to have made \$2,000 on a club that was open only three weeks.

It is, of course, the old story of Broadway dying hard. It will not accept the inevitable. The lure is the hundreds who have been able to leave mediocrity and by selling illicit hooch buy country homes and limousines.

Broadway is always looking for easy money. It considers work as an invention for the boobery. So long as none of the violators are sent to jail they will not worry. And so the dance goes on.

A new story around the Lamb's. A country dandy on the job for the first day fell down an elevator shaft eight floors and lay there. After an hour his employer missed him and began hunting around. He peered in the open elevator door and way down in the darkness thought he saw a human form.

"That you down there, Sam?" he called.

"Yes, boss. I'm here all right. But if you are coming down look out. That first step is a brute."

She sat alone in a half darkened hotel lobby long after midnight—a wisp of a girl. Finally a house detective approached her. It was no place for one of her years at such an hour. And she told her story. She was waiting for a man whose name is prominent. In a headed bag she carried a pearl-handled pistol. It was the old story of one of the thousands of girl children left stranded on the mounds of pleasure.

The old wheeze "How's business; you're a lar?" seems to apply to the theater these days. Even the speculators are running on short rations. It is one of those unaccountable slumps that come now and then. And one man's guess is just as good as another as to the reason. Poor plays, is mine.

There is a certain playwright for whom I have long cherished an aversion. Not that it matters and this may not be the proper place to air personal dislikes. But a few days ago he went out of his way to do a very gracious and kindly thing for me. I learned of it through others. The point is that most of us go through life disliking people without real justification. It would be a pretty good epitaph, it seems to me, to have written truthfully on one's tomb: "He Never Liked Anyone."

There is only one fierce hatred I cannot quench. And that is for the man who poisoned a dog of mine nearly 30 years ago. The memory of that dog's terrible agony is as vivid today as it was then. And the poisoner in the guise of a sympathizer looked on.