

"THE GOLDEN BED"

By WALLACE IRWIN.

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

(Continued from Yesterday.)

San Pilar's conversation proved upon analysis, to be little more than a series of pleasant and naive questionings. But the last question offered a golden opportunity to Zeno's descriptive powers. He gave an impression of vast real estate holdings, such as the Duke of Westminster's in the gray heart of London. Judge Peake, sah? Zeno reckoned he owned everything from the K. & G. down depot to the River, throwing in the railroad, the slaughter house and the Newberry Lumber Yards. The Columbus district in America and Judge Peake could be king, Zeno reckoned, if he wasn't too old to take the nomination. Everybody took off his hat to the Peakes, including the Mayor. "Yah, sah, Mist' Marquis, ain't that the truth?"

He was a modern negro, school-trained and inclined, among his friends, to boast of his political and rights. But instinctively he held the Peakes in reverential awe. They were to him a standard of greatness; all the mythical estates which he had described dwelt in his imagination, an ideal of what the Peakes should be. His pride in them was nothing less than his pride in himself. He had boasted magnificently for fear that this arrogant stranger, coming to his home town, should dare to look down on Zeno's paragon. And for the same reason there were several things he did not mention. He failed to explain that he, Zeno, had been hired to come in, just as half the other servants had been hired to come in, during San Pilar's stay. He failed to explain how the servants were gossiping of unpaid butchers' bills even while the oxen were choked with festive meals. Of how Mr. Garnett had been quarreling with his second wife because she refused to surrender any more money from her own estate. Of the true reason why the fine old mansion now stood isolated among shops, boarding houses and public institutions. Zeno, in fact, had had like a gentleman.

Meanwhile the Marquis Carlos Domingo de San Pilar descended to the first dinner dance of his season in that generous Southern city. Many laughing voices, coming from the wide drawing room apprised him that his guests had arrived and that he was, as usual, a little late. "Bunny, you little old slow-poke!" A beautiful comet, all in rose and silver, pushed at him just as he rounded the newel-post and addressed him thus unceremoniously. "Bunny, she always had names for things, and she would call him that, the little savage!"

"Adorable!" he whispered, but Flora Lee drew back her sweetly modeled head, hazel eyes and a little crease mouth with an interesting little crease in her lower lip invited him yet warned him away. Between Carlos

and the Marquis, the latter was making boon companions of them all. A man of the world, quick on his feet, he could adjust himself instantly to the Faubourg Saint Germain or the Bal Tabarin. The chatter and coquetry of the younger fry amused and excited him. Flora Lee, however, was leading at least two of them to believe that there was yet a little hope. The Judges and Garnett and the second Mrs. Peake, who joined a circle of the elders under the central chandelier and the old gentleman was grimly hiding his disapproval of his youngest son's conduct. He called Flora Lee and calling to Harris for another cocktail.

"Where's Margaret?" he asked abruptly of his daughter-in-law. "Oh—she's late—I'm sure I don't know." "Remarkable," muttered the old gentleman. Margaret was seldom late. If it had been Flora Lee, now.

Just then the Marquis de San Pilar raised his eyes to see another Flora Lee, grown a little taller, a little older, a little more serious, standing on the threshold of the wide door. She lacked some of the sparkle and the devilry of Flora Lee, just as her hair was less lustrous, her skin less transparent. But she had fine eyes. . . . The owner of those fine eyes moved forward and the Peakes distinguished her by her name. He judged her compliments with a small, secretive smile and her manner, although excellent, was rather cold. He judged her to be sarcastic. San Pilar should have known, for he had studied many women. She lingered just an instant, then crossed the room to where her stepmother stood. "Miss Nellie—" she began—she had never learned to call her "Mother" as Flora Lee did so glibly—"can't you change my place or let me stay out?" "Margaret, darling!" This in a worried stage whisper. "Jeff Carter can't come. He's just telephoned. Something about business in Baltimore." "How horrid of him!" began Mrs. Peake, then more practically, "Hole Savage has just telephoned, too. That makes it even. Tell Harris, won't you, honey?"

Out in the dining room Margaret retained that fixed, mysterious smile.

When I was Sam's age I recall I was not studying or working. I was, as was the manner of the times, practicing flinging back a long lock of hair with a flirt of the head. That in those days was real swank. It is comparable now perhaps to hitting it out for a road house in a low slung roadster at 100 miles an hour.

A retired New York bachelor confesses he only dresses once a week and that is to go to a play. The rest of the time he lounges about in house robes, reads and frolics with a kennel of dogs he keeps on the roof of the apartment house where he lives.

Until I came to New York I had never seen those sturdy silk house robes New Yorkers affect. I had read about them only in Robert W. Chambers' novels. Now they are part of every well-equipped wardrobe. They are even being worn on the street late at night by men out airing their dogs.

Incidentally I saw one silk robe in a Fifth Avenue haberdashery that bore a price tag marked \$450. (Copyright, 1924.)

she was even jolly with Harris, whom she regarded more as an old friend than an old servant. But it wouldn't do to give the negroes even a hint of what was brewing. She loved them and she knew their very human faults. "Close ranks, Harris—two of us have dropped out," she commanded

and Flora Lee kissing was over for the time. She hadn't asked her father, as a serious foreigner should, and she had passed the point of trifling. Also people from the drawing room could see them and talk and venture opinions.

A wave of emotion seemed to sweep him forward, quite at the mercy of this North American girl, who enjoyed a freedom, permitted intimacies unheard of among unmarried ladies of his world. In their early philandering days, with stashes, their hair remains sane enough to consider her estates in the New World. Tonight he was beyond such calculations. He was reckless in love for the first time, perhaps in seven years.

The Peakes had never been more lavish with their decorations. Under garlands of red roses, without old chandeliers to cornice a score of pretty girls, their faces animated under the fluffy pompadours of 1913, they shouldered their narrow skirts decorously sheathed in long white gloves, their waists pinched in and their backs, their hair remains sane enough to consider her estates in the New World. Tonight he was beyond such calculations. He was reckless in love for the first time, perhaps in seven years.

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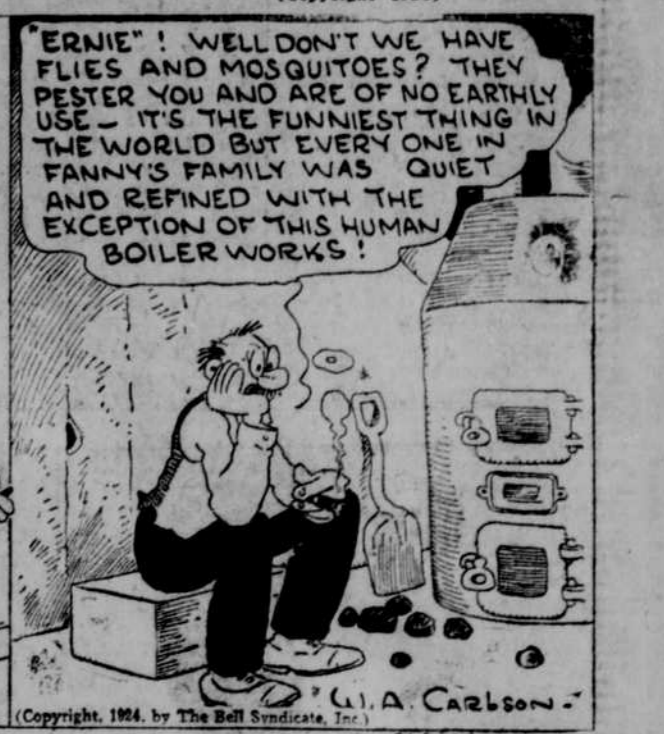
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THE NEBBES



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

Barney Google and Spark Plug



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck (Copyright 1924)

BRINGING UP FATHER



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus (Copyright 1924)

JERRY ON THE JOB



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban (Copyright 1924)

Real Folks at Home (The Street Sweeper)



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



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