

SOULS for SALE

By RUPERT HUGHES.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Mem was so wooed by Holly. The mere brooding upon him as a lover, a husband, a protector who would once have solved an ugly problem into beauty, presented him to Mem in a light of compelling warmth.

She tried to shake off the spell but from now on there was an aureole of chivalrous self-sacrifice about Tom Holly that changed him altogether from the flippant, too polite, and far too popular idol of foolish girls that she had rated him.

All through the taking of that picture Mem watched him as from a lattice that hid her from him, but disclosed him to her in the kindest and most beautiful way. The picture had to be made in record time because the producers had a limited capital and an unlimited experience of the disastrous expense of leislarelines.

The director, Kendrick, was a slave driver, a worshiper of schedules. He demanded that the people be on the set made up, costumed, coiffed, and wide awake, so that the cameras might begin to grin at 9 sharp. But he was not so punctual about letting the weary troupsers knock off at 5. He kept them often till nearly 7.

When Mem's day of toil was over she was so footsore, so soulless, and had seen so much of Tom Holly and his manufactured love, that she had no inclination to see him of evenings, and he made no effort to see her. She crept into her bed at 9 when

she was not kept at the studio for night work. She was called at 8 and began the day with a long and dreary building up of a false complexion, layer on layer, line by line.

She rarely saw Tom Holly's real face. He also was painted like an Indian brave.

But for all the fatigue and the artifice, there was a feeling of delight and of friendliness on the stage. Cooperation was necessary and it was the custom. The technical problems were innumerable and their discussions as scientific as laboratory debates.

The reward of rewards was the rapture of creation. Nearly all the men of the company would rather act than eat, rather play feigned sorrow than indulge in real joys. They sought for difficult tasks, they were grateful for demands upon their utmost resources. They smiled only when their toil was diminished or they were left out of a scene or not taxed to their limit.

She whirled on him in surprise and stared through a shower of tears. Then a smile broke from her blubbering lips and she giggled.

"Oh, I'm just getting ready for a big crying scene."

He fell back as if he had touched a serpent. He was disgusted with himself for making such a fool of himself and wanting his precious pity on a little trickster.

The climax of Mem's shamelessness was reached one day when Robina

Teels and the great Miriam Yore visited the studio and stopped for lunch in the commissary. Mem was put on her mettle by the grandiose condensation of Miss Yore and by the suspicious jealousy of Robina Teels.

The matter of tears for sale came up and Miss Yore spoke of how she got hers.

"I find that if I use the tone of voice intentionally which I use unintentionally when I am really crying, the tears come. It may be just muscle memory or it may be that I grow very sorry for myself."

Robina did not know how she got hers.

"Margaret Anglin said she could cry at will over a fried egg or anything. So can I. I just imagine the scene and say to myself, 'Cry' and I cry till the director says, 'Cut!'"

Neither of the famous women thought to ask the rising Miss Stoddard how she manipulated her lachrymal art. Tom Holly, feeling that she was slighted, brought her in to it by asking her system.

"Prayer and brute strength," said Mem.

Robina was in an assertive mood, and, as one violinist might challenge another to a concerto or an orator

propose a debate to another, she called for a duel of tears. She thought she could send Miss Yore back to the grand opera she had come from.

"Let's have a crying contest," she said.

"I should have to have music," said Miss Yore.

"Come over on my set and we'll give you your favorite tune," said Holly. He dragged Remember Stoddard along, though the two veterans did not take her into account.

Holly explained to the director that they were to have a held day of emotion, and he consented to defer the scene he was about to shoot.

Miss Yore wanted the theme of the "Lohengrin" played over and over. The whoopey little portable organ made a sad mess of Wagner's braided harmonies, but the violinist caught the cry of the melody.

Robina could cry best for "Just a Song at Twilight," but she gracefully yielded the choice of music to Miss Yore.

Mem had never heard an opera, grand or comic. But the strangely climbing anguish of the tune caught her up on its pinions, and lifted her into that ether where the souls of

imaginative artists fly in all disguises and assume all personalities.

The rest of the company and the crew stood aloof and watched in amazement as the two world-famed stars and the rising young asteroid, Mem, began to war with their own features like athletes tuning up or shadow-boxing.

The three women walked apart for a moment, grimacing and forcing themselves into a state of agony. Robina achieved the first sob. She broke and flung herself on a couch and sobbed aloud. Mem jealously decided that she was cheating and rather looked down on her shoulder work. It was punny.

She stared at Miriam Yore, an ambulant statue of heroic postures, lifting her hands to heaven, carrying them clasped to her fulsome bosom, and indulging in the despair of a Moses or a Cornwall princess whose draperies must also weep about her beautifully.

In Mem's eyes Miss Yore was an starry as Miss Teels was scornful. Neither of them seemed quite human. Gary to Mem was a homely, unlovely, tearing, disordering thing. To cry gracefully was not to cry at all.

(To be continued tomorrow.)

Daily Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee for this new day with its new mercies. Help us to live this day with a high purpose and a worthy resolution. We would make thy will the law of our lives. May we seek daily to know thy will. We thank thee for the gift of thy Son, who came to give us the abundant life. May his life be lived in us so that we may glorify thee. Take away meanness and littleness and selfishness from our lives and make us more like our Master. Help us to be thy fellow-workers, seeking first the Kingdom and thy righteousness, knowing that all other needful things will be added unto us. Teach us self-control and give us strength for all our tasks. Bless us, guide us and protect us in our home and when away from its sheltering care. Give us day by day new revelations of thine infinite love, thy boundless compassion and thy matchless sympathy. We ask it all in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A. F. KRIST, Pastor, First Lutheran Church.

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