

# "THE GOLDEN BED"

By WALLACE IRWIN.

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

(Continued from Yesterday.)

Stature aside, the Peake girls differed only in subtleties. Physically Flora Lee was a shade the finer; a purer blond, softer skinned, smaller boned. Her hair was not so heavy as Margaret's, but it held the pallid gold of an Italian figure. Margaret's eyes were the more beautiful; they had the candid quality of crystal against warm gray velvet. Flora Lee's were shot with hazel—the youthful portrait of General Horatio Peake, Continental Army, showed eyes like hers, accounting possibly for his record as a duellist and an investigator of duels. From infancy that dash of hazel gave Flora Lee an advantage.

The Livingstone children fancied Billygoats. They kept a barn full of them. Billygoats in every stage of horn-and-hair development. With the aid of Rol and Jeff Carter and the whole resident tribe, including several anomalous negroes, they would torture these animals and race excitedly up and down the drives. The sport amused Margaret until the day she discovered that Rol always went out of her chariot and did the very thing he most detested.

She went over to one of the stone gate posts, climbed it by dint of considerable exertion and personal courage, and got herself astride the rambling, tail-raised iron lion which was planted there to howl defiance against trespassers.

"Margaret Peake, you come down from there!" commands the angered brother.

"You said I couldn't do it. Look, I can—"

The law of gravitation spoils her little human boast. She loses her balance, sinks down on all fours and saves herself by a lucky clutch at the monster's unyielding mane.

"I'll have to tell grandmother this," says Roland, frowning.

"Tattle tale!"

"You get down from there," says Margaret. "Nobody can make me," says Margaret. "Nobody does."

On a bench not far away Flora Lee Peake is being "read to" by old Linda, who doesn't know one letter from another, but follows the text by the pictures. Flora Lee's languid eyes are on the crude illustrations of sleeping Beauty; during Margaret's adventure she hasn't taken the trouble to look up.

Still scolding her, Roland is helping Margaret climb down from the lion's pedestal. But Flora Lee's eyes are

on a shabby boy of thirteen who in defiance of his ignorance of Livestock rules, has shuffled into the gate, a market basket over his arm. The boy with the market basket stoops dead in his tracks and stares at the two bright-haired girls. He recognizes the name. To him the Peake women are like the goddesses whom Aeneas knew in passing by the fragrance of their tresses.

"Here the Candy Boy!" shouts Margaret, speaking of him as she would of some inanimate object. "Lend me a dime, Rawl!"

"Lend you nothin'" grumbled Roland, and rejects his goat. The Candy Boy, razing with the fascinated look of a wild creature, fumbles an instant with his paper bags, then relinquishes a half-formed plan. The girl's crystal eyes are studying him, whether in disapproval or sympathy he does not know. Her look stings him. Shuffling away, he hesitates in front of the bench where the little girl sits with her hands, and her eyes go out to him, coaxing with a sort of proud mendacity. He has no power, no wish to resist her; his action is hypnotic as he reaches into his basket, brings out three peppermint drops and lays them in her soft, warm palm.

"Hey, boy!" he can hear old Linda's scolding tone following him through the gate. "What you doin' in Jin'el Livin'stone's place? Ain't you got no sense? Has you lost yo' mind, boy, givin' candy to Jedge Peake's granchillun?"

The Peake house was completed nineteen years before the Civil War. Horatio Peake built it for his bride, Miss Randolph of Albemarle County, Virginia. A gentleman who traveled much in youth, Horatio Peake digressed considerably from the American taste of his day and, like Thomas Jefferson, built to his own ideal. Horatio Peake's experiment was Renaissance rather than Georgian; the portico, shading the entire lower portion of the facade, was semi-circular in form with tall Corinthian pillars. The panes of the upper windows were marked off in graceful ovals of a pattern seldom encountered in that region of the South. A French architect named Pitou had suggested these windows together with other niceties of design.

Only Sallie Peake's bedroom, on the second floor overlooking the side garden, had escaped Grandfather's itch for improvement. Little Flora Lee, born with an instinct for Versailles, had loved this room since she could see it. Mornings before her mother was up—which was any morning in the week—the small girl would stand peering in, refusing to be bullied away by Linda's awesome warnings. The room was charged with fascination. It was oval in shape, paneled in yellow brocade and with the candelabra dripped crystals that looked like ladies' earrings. The gilt chairs had fluted legs, too slender to support any but the lightest of princesses. Upon the floor an enchanted carpet was spread, flowered with roses and garlanded with laurel. Then there was Mother's bed. Horatio Peake had brought it from Venice. Flora Lee was to learn years later when she owned that bed and slept in it. As a small child she peeked at it and thought of the Sleeping Beauty.

There were golden flowers, asphaltum perhaps, twined all around the headboard. Upon the spines of its four short posts perched gilded swans, their wings spread, their heads drawn back belligerently in serpentine necks. Like lovely, graceful dragons they stood all night and guarded dreams. An Hesperian wanderer, this bed, in hand where Georgean mahogany reached the window of its polished severity. A state barge out of some hyperborean channel, it had floated into the tall house in Inness Street, and a rather worn woman with bronze hair and eyes that lost their wrinkles when she slept lay all morning, every morning, crumpled languidly between its guardian swans. Sometimes she would open those eyes like parasites caught fire in the center, and beckon to the little spy in the door.

"Flora Lee, honey, come here an' kiss me good mornin'!"

"Mother, Linda says I must go to the Park." The child would complain, throwing herself into arms more languid than her own.

"Linda!"

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"Linda!"

"Yas'm." The old negress would step forward and assume the respectfully critical pose of one who, in bondage, had enjoyed her privileges.

"Linda, have you lost your mind, smuglin' my child away in the mawnin' before I'm so much as awake?"

"Good laf, Miss Sally!" Linda would exclaim. Not in the least intimidated by the great lady whom she had baby-nursed, "Ef Flo' Lee wuz to wait in th' house evvy mawnin' till you woke up she'd grow like a mushroon, neva seen' daylight."

"Oh, hush, and straighten up the room a little, will you, Linda? Samantha's perfectly useless since she got married."

"Yas'm. Marriage takes 'em that-a-way sometin's." Linda would pillow, stooping to sort out the litter of shoes, letters, lingerie, ribbons and paper-covered novels which strewn the rug like objects hurled before a high wind.

Sally Peake, propped up in bed, her favorite daughter across her knees, would study the little girl's eyes with a sort of wild gentleness, running a tawny curl thoughtfully across her forehead. Then without any accountable motive she would lean down and kiss one of the small feet. It was a foolish act, as though Flora Lee were a bare-toed baby.

"They ought never to touch the ground, except to dance," the mother would exclaim, pride and pathos in her voice.

"How could I get to the Livin'stone Place without feet—Jesse I had wings like the swans!" Flora Lee was fascinated by the golden guardians on her mother's bedposts.

"Someone must always carry you, my dear." Generations of self-indulgent grandmothers spoke through her lips.

"But Linda says I'm gettin' too old to be carried."

"Somebody always will. Always—"

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

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## THE NEBBS



HELLO FANNY, - THIS IS RUDY - SAY, HONEY. I WON'T BE HOME FOR DINNER - ONE OF OUR GOOD CUSTOMERS FROM OUT OF TOWN IS VISITING HERE AND I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM TO DINNER AND MAYBE A SHOW - YES SURE, AS EARLY AS I CAN

TELL HER YOU MIGHT BE LATE



12-18

## WILD OATS.

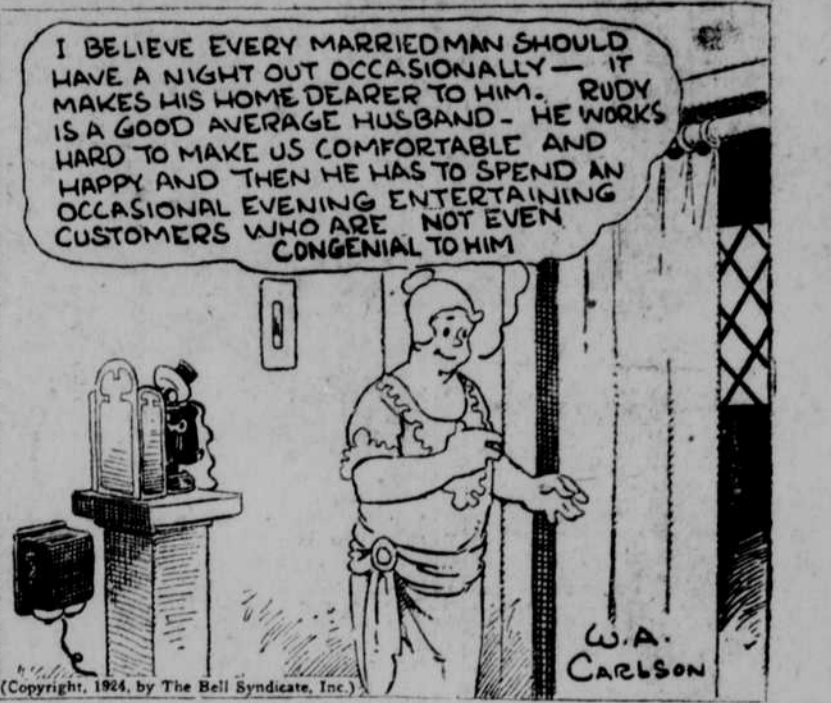


OW SHE WAS SO SWEET - SHE SAID "TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND HAVE A GOOD TIME" - SAY YOU'LL HAVE TO BUY AT LEAST A PINT OF WATER SO I CAN CONSIDER YOU A CUSTOMER AND NOT MAKE A FIGGER OUT OF MYSELF

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, KID - I'LL BUY A GALLON BUT IF YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND THE EVENING IN REMORSE YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO HOME - I'M NOT USED TO RUNNING AROUND WITH AMATEURS



## Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



I BELIEVE EVERY MARRIED MAN SHOULD HAVE A NIGHT OUT OCCASIONALLY - IT MAKES HIS HOME DEARER TO HIM - RUDY IS A GOOD AVERAGE HUSBAND - HE WORKS HARD TO MAKE US COMFORTABLE AND HAPPY AND THEN HE HAS TO SPEND AN OCCASIONAL EVENING ENTERTAINING CUSTOMERS WHO ARE NOT EVEN CONGENIAL TO HIM



## Barney Google and Spark Plug



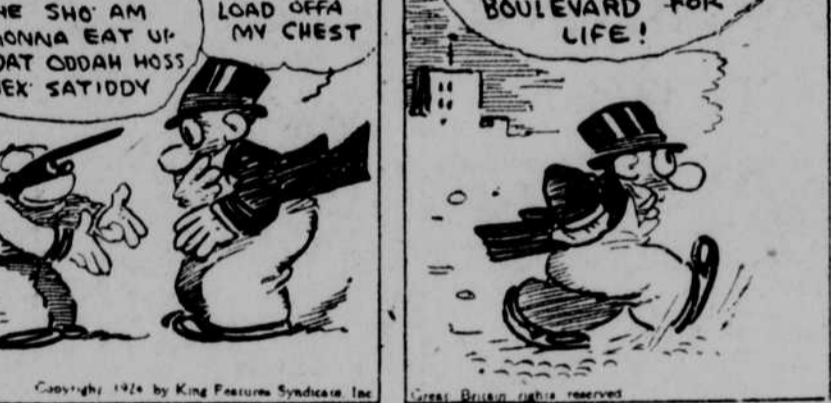
IF SPARKY LOSES THE RACE A DAY AFTER TOMORROW I'M GONNA BE IN A FINE MESS - ALL THOSE I.O.U.'S I GOT OUT AGAINST ME - \$350 PLUNKS AND NOT A THIN DIME TO COVER MY BETS -



## BRINGING UP FATHER



BOSS YOU ALL DON'T HAVE TO FRET - AN JEST HAD SPARKY OUT FO' HIS DAILY DOZEN AN HE GO LAK A STWEAK O' LIGHTNUN - HE SHO AM GONNA EAT UP DAT ODDAH HOSS NEX SATIDDY



## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck



LADY, WILL YOU TRUST ME FOR A PENCIL AND A BIG PAD OF WRITING PAPER? I WANT TO MAKE A FEW MORE BETS ON MY HORSE!



## New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, Dec. 17.—I have, despite the current number of excellent plays, been cleaving to my first love—vaudeville—lately. I have the yoked mind that finds romance no doubt in the comic stage of vaudeville to me is teeming with romance. I love the bladder-whackery of burlesque too.

There is a beautiful young girl in vaudeville, for instance, who shares plaudits with a trained ape. I wonder if there is jealousy between them. He seems to run away with the act. And what happens to the performers when the animal they have spent so much time training dies?

It seems to me the only sure fire method of winning applause in vaudeville is to be a dancer and be able to hold one foot in the hand and jump through it with the other. In all my experience in the halls I have never seen it fail.

Vaudeville children live in a world apart. Their life is jumping from one town to another—sleeping on trunks and in hotel rooms. I wonder if they know how to play? Off stage, they are the shyest children I ever saw. Behind the footlights they are the worldiest.

And why does a nut song never fail to ring the bell? "Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean" is still raging. So are a dozen more as senseless. Clog shoes with bells have a wide appeal. And there never was a Dutch wooden shoe dancer who didn't get a hand, no matter how frigid the audience.

There is one thing the vaudeville audience lacks and that is respect for the last act on the bill. No matter how good it may be the house walks out. There has never been a solution for this problem. Vaudeville needs a "Stay for the Finish" campaign.

My love for acrobats and jugglers is unabated—including the Scandinavian. Twice daily they risk necks for the faintest of applause. But did you ever see them lose their respect for the audience? On a legitimate stage the treatment they receive would be rebuked with a stinging curtain speech.

Bellevue's psychopathic ward has a strange alcoholic case. He talks and writes backwards. He asked to send a letter to a friend and without effort he wrote thusly: "I march to Euzelab dna yeh knit I ma yzarc. Dnes pu a knid."

New York's most famous boot-legger was 19 years ago an indifferent professional dancer. His engagements at the second rate cabarets were few and far between. Today he has several cars, a fine home and his wife is one of the best dressed women in town. Nightly they occupy a best table where the smartest crowds go. He does not drink. Neither does she. They still dance every dance but it is noticed that no one ever talks to them. Perhaps they are happy but one doubts it.

The theaters, by the way, are presenting almost every country. There are plays in Russian, Yiddish, French, Chinese, Czech-Slovakian, Jap-ese and Scottish. Why not Turks in "Haltosis?"

Was the famous jewel robbery during the prince of Wales visit on Long Island a publicity stunt? A keen society reporter hints at it in this fashion: "Anna Field had her milk baths—so why shouldn't a certain Long Island family have their jewel robbery?" One thing is certain a lot of people never before in the social registry have landed there because the prince took them up. It is almost impossible to believe there is such silly enoblesness in the old world.

## JERRY ON THE JOB



GOSH DARN THOSE BLOTS - THEY'RE BUMMING ON THE JOB AGAIN - STANDING THERE LIKE A COUPLE OF TREES.



## A SLIGHT DELAY.



I'LL HOP OUT AND SPEAK TO 'EM, MR. FIGSBY IS THAT AGREEABLE TO YOU?



## Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



WERE JUST WAITIN' FOR IT TO GET DIRTY.

## Real Folks at Home (The Freight Elevator Man)



IS SUPPER READY?



OH - IS IT YOU GEORGE!



WELL I HAD A TOUGH DAY CARRIE



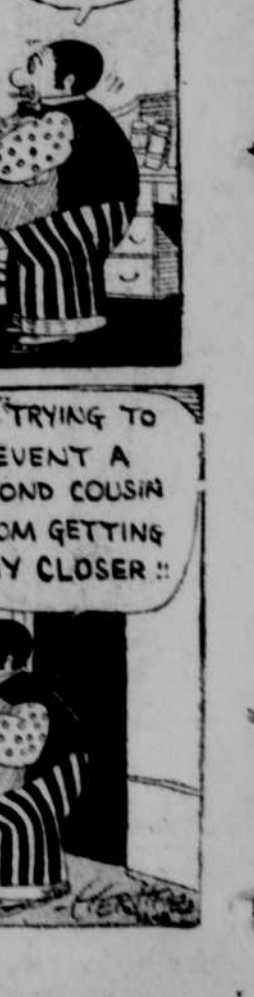
HURRY AND GET WASHED



MADE EIGHTY TWO TRIPS MOST OF 'EM TO TH' ROOF AND A LOTTA STOPS - THAT'S WHAT KILLS



YOU SHOULD ASK FOR MORE PAY



## By Briggs ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hersfield



NOD, HERE HE IS AGAIN, THAT PEST - NOW IT'LL COMMENCE !!



I'LL MARRY YOUR SISTER AND YOU AIN'T GOING TO STOP ME, EITHER!!



SHE LOVES ME AND I LOVE HER!

YOU'RE A NO GOOD PHOODY NOBODY!!

WHAT'S THE BIG ARGUMENT IN THERE, ABOUT?

I'M TRYING TO PREVENT A SECOND COUSIN FROM GETTING ANY CLOSER !!