

# "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.)

"How deo do, Ma'am," he said politely, for the figure was now close to the running board. She was slender and young and a fragile evening cloak covered her shoulder. "How do you do?" There might have been mockery in the tenuous voice, but it became wheedling with the request, "I'm away out here with nobody to take me in—could you?"

"Yes, ma'am. Mightily pleased, I'm shore!" He would have alighted to help her in, but she developed a surprising agility and leaped to the seat beside him. Because his dash light was out of order—something was always a little wrong with his Ford—he had no more than a glimpse of her face. It was a faintly beautiful thing that seemed to cast a radiance in the dimness. He sat like a lump, and waited. "Oh, please hurry," she begged. "I do hope you're a speed maniac. I must go back to town."

"Once I'm started nothin' can stop me," he boasted recklessly and hopped out to crank up. In the labor of turning the engine he paused once and peered up at the stars. Millions of them, wastefully scattered across the heavenly arch. A moon like a thread of silver was sloping westward. . . . Queer that he should have thought of Mabel Stek. . . . Then the motor began to vibrate furiously and Admah sprang back into his seat. When they were on their way he turned and looked again. She was a smallish girl, no higher than his shoulder. Under the first rays of light he got an impression of bright hair and eyes that met his like pools of light. He could feel her warmth against his arm and catch a tender perfume. "Cold?" he asked. They had gone nearly a mile and she had asked nothing so far.

"Sort of," she responded, giving a little shudder. "You make the car put its arm around her and protect her as though she were a little child. Instead he stopped the car again and removed his overcoat. "Just slip this on," he said, "I'm used to the wind. I was gettin' too hot anyhow."

"Oh, thank you," she purred, as she bent her shoulders and permitted him to wrap her in his new hand-me-down. And when she had settled back and the car was again in motion she sighed and murmured sleepily, "You needn't go so awfully fast."

"New York --Day by Day--"

By O. O. MINTYRE. New York, Jan. 8.—Thoughts while strolling around New York: The tiny specialty shop district of Madison avenue. Prices higher than on Fifth. And all are busy. The New York idea—Jack up the prices and the bootery comes on the run. The antique dealers specialize in early American furniture. Ginsberg and O'Leary—there's a pair hard to beat. Nothing so fascinating as an hour glass. Ben All Haggin, the painter. Smooth and debonaire. And always with a pretty girl. The Whitehall Reid mansion. Bleak and sloff. Circular driveway that represents a fortune in real estate. And is rarely used. A dog and book shop—both marbles. A dog and book shop—both made a million out of sandwiches. For the elite. Stockings are getting entirely too sheer. And the hats too cloche—what ever that is. A fine street, boot off into blocks of cheap flats, boot off into blocks, riding academies and delicatessen shops. A cop kisses a nurse maid. The brazen thing. Beyond the uptown Ghetto raises its melody. A thousand cart torches. Flat aproned women with baskets. Old men with chains like Punch. Young girls with loose looks. Hall bedrooms—black holes from which working girls emerge in the morning looking like butterflies. What the world needs is a cure for poverty. Swarthy men with one ring in their ear and vivid red scarves. Dogish young corner galleons—who fight for their girls. Marry them and loaf ever after. Now and then a little rose shaded room. Window signs: "Beauty culture schools and all night commodes. Children dancing in the street at midnight. Pool parlors that average a murder a month. The fretting whine of babies. Now for home. Society leaders are eternally going in for such things. Now they are becoming haberdashers. Dudley C. Eldridge has a haberdashery on East Fifty-second street. Frederick Cruger has opened another on East Forty-third street. Each is prominent in the affairs of the 400.

Sidewalk curiosity in New York is just as highly developed as in Purdy's Gap, W. Va. A certain jewelry establishment had just been painted and was being with signs reading "Fresh Paint." In an hour's time the corner cop counted 22 people who, overcome with a desire to test the truthfulness of the sign, touched their fingers to the wet paint. And just an ordinary safe holding in any part of the city will necessitate the presence of extra policemen to keep back the curious.

There is a magazine writer who a year ago became suddenly obsessed with the idea that he had only a short while to live. Expert diagnosticians found him perfectly fit physically and an expert explained it was a mere phobia that he could shake off with mental effort. But to no avail, he continued to brood. And then he began feverishly to write. Heretofore he had been able to write leisurely and successfully and choose his market. Now he is trying to write for good, bad and indifferent magazines and as a result is landing only now and then. In fact the better magazines reached the point where they would take nothing he writes. Yet he keeps plugging away desperately and forlornly.

The first stop for shows closing on Broadway and as a prelude to a road tour is the Simbert Riviera on upper Broadway. It is here that the players really say their farewell to a successful run. The one week there gives them the chance to rent their apartments and arrange their affairs for the tour of the provinces.

(Copyright, 1925.)

"You said you wanted a speed maniac," she replied defensively. "You've proved it," she drawled, settling more snugly against his arm. "I hadn't the least notion you could go so fast."

"I pass most everything on the road," he lied recklessly. "Those big cars are clumsy to handle around the curves. Now take a car with a short shanny."

"I never could learn anything about cars," she said, in the sweetest voice he had ever heard, and her words implied an admiration that set the driver's heart to thumping. "It must be wonderful to know how to handle them. They're so much more complicated than horses."

"Her tone suggested that anybody could manage a thoroughbred and that Admah, like herself, had grown bored with racing stables. "I had a horse once," he confessed, thinking of old John, "but I sold him."

"I've sold mine, too," she muttered drowsily. Then there was another silence. Her sweet young body pressed against his arm, pleading to be protected. The wind had loosened a strand of her hair and it brushed his cheek delightfully.

"Are you in the automobile business?" she asked at last, softly, admiringly. "Gosh no!" So she thought him in the automobile business. "I sell candy."

"Maybe you've heard of me," he persisted, urged by the triple intoxication of the night and the liquor and the girl. "I go by the name of Candy Holtz."

"Candy Holtz," she did not say it mockingly. It rolled out sweetly like a strain of music. "Candy Holtz. So you're the man."

"You've heard of me maybe?" "Everybody has the last four or five years of our peppermints we used to buy at Miss Martincastle's School."

To this Admah might have said, "Yes, I was the boy who carried the basket." But instead he asked quite casually, "Then you went to Miss Martincastle?"

"Oh, yes," drawled his passenger. "I helped kill the old dear." "She might have produced the dripping sword and lost no credit in his regard.

"I been buildin' up right smart of a business here in the last four or five years," he resumed his boast, then checked himself. This bright being from another world, this Diana who had beckoned to him under her crescent moon, would not approve his vernacular speech. Even Mabel Stek had criticized it. But the lovely lady who smuggled against his arm, her hair just brushing his cheek, was no more critical than any other goddess in meeting with her shepherd lad.

"It must be right interestin'," she crooned. "I never could understand how business men make so much money—and keep it all their own—straight!" This last was infantile in its helplessness. "It must take real brains. But you're in with a lot of lawyers, I suppose, and they help you work up your wonderful schemes."

If Admah's ego had inflated before it now rose to the bursting point. In with a lot of lawyers. . . . his wonderful schemes. "Oh, this is just a starter," he explained. "I'm projikin' round a little."

"You're what?" There was no mockery in her voice. Merely an ignorant child's desire to learn. But Admah blushed in the dark and corrected himself.

"I'm looking over the ground for new business all the time. The town's getting up to a quarter of a million now, and that ought to keep me busy for a while. But I don't want to be stopped by any city limits. I want to extend my stores all over the State, then branch out across the River and start another chain in Cincinnati."

"Tell me some more," she urged. "Well, there ain't much more to tell—yet," he assured her with a touch of modesty. "This town has been growin' up like all the others in America and there's a chance every where for a man that keeps his eyes open."

She sighed, and he began to realize

that this little person had no ear for real estate opportunities. He would have given the Red Front and all its future for a mouthful of small talk, just a few of the graceful words with which dress-coated men at the Sycamore Club must know how to lay traps for feminine attention. But she saved him that embarrassment.

"I'm so tired," she moaned. "I wonder if you'd mind my leaning on you, just for a minute?" "I'm—I'm delighted, I'm sure," he gasped, puzzled, bewitched, unsure that he had heard aright.

"I know it's dreadful of me," she apologized, and in another instant her garlanded head was resting on his shoulder.

For the last mile and a half, before the city lights burst upon them, it was a ride of terrible beauty for Admah Holtz. Prospero had whisked his world away, changing his Ford to a snow-white palfrey, himself to a splendid knight in heavy armor, out of an enchanted grove a voice had called to him, a captive maid had raised her arms, beseeching his protection. Dismaying the soft dainties of the court she had chosen him, the Unknown Knight, to be her champion. . . . How he would ride with her! How he would fight for her!

"Poor kid," he whispered, looking down at the childish head pillowed against his shoulder. In the dimness he could see little more than a cloud of hair. It was as though she had died in his arms, pathetic and helpless. Then he felt the evidence of her breathing. Perhaps she had fallen asleep. Asleep against his shoulder.

He began to wonder what knavery what rank injustice had driven her into the road, unprotected and pleading to be taken away. His gorge rose at the very thought of it. How he wished for a little more social courage, just to get the truth from her and to offer his knightly services. (To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

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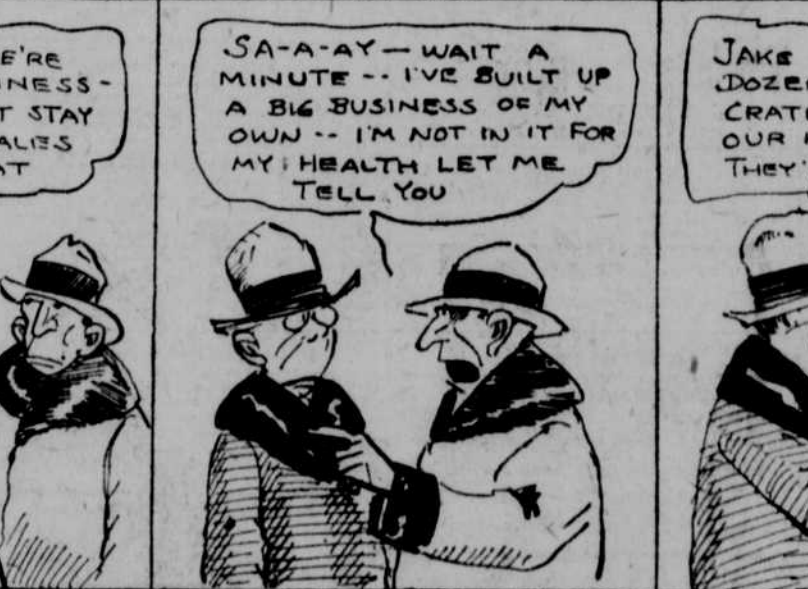
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