

# "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.)

She was "actin' up," as Ma Holtz would have said. And so for Uncle Lefe, Admah was helpless with the fear that he might bring out his tobacco plug.

But when he came back with Calvin and the cocktails the atmosphere had settled. What had Flora Lee done to them all? Behold the three, seated in a prim triangle, stiff-backed, affected! Flora Lee was doing most of the talking while Captain Lefe, hands on knees, contributed an occasional, "Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am."

"The summers here are trying, don't you think?" Flora Lee was visibly struggling to make conversation.

"Yes, ma'am," admitted Captain Holtz.

"We were planning to go back to Maine for the season, but the coast resorts—the desirable ones—are so inaccessible from here. One can't choose, can one?"

"No, ma'am." He looked, and like a dog that has been caught sleeping on a silk cushion.

"Do have a cocktail, Mrs. Holtz," Aunt Brownie gaped blindly. Without a word the Captain took his, smelled it, regarded it with an unfriendly eye.

"What's in them things?" he bawled.

"What is, Admah?" asked Flora Lee with the sweetness of a lady to swallow her hat without a grimace.

"Gin and vermouth and pineapple juice, I reckon," explained the nervous host.

"Huh!" Uncle Lefe gulped, then twirled the glass between his fingers. It might have been a poisonous insect, crushed before it could sting.

Calvin announced dinner, but Uncle Lefe sat immobile while the others had risen. "Git up!" whispered Brownie. "What's that?" he asked, aroused from his reverie. Finally he lumbered up and followed.

Strangely enough he did not touch his napkin under his chin, neither did he eat with his knife. Admah suspected that Aunt Brownie had been coaching him, for he watched her very carefully before making a move to unfold his napkin; in the unfolding he knocked a fork to the floor and gazed, obsequiously, at an attempt to pick it up. In approaching the soup he looked over the array of silver before selecting the only

possible instrument. He worked noisily and ceased abruptly, having caught Aunt Brownie's eye.

Then he seemed to lose appetite. To Admah, who had so often seen him at Dell's Landing, feeding like panta-grel, the change was uncanny. Now he appeared of a dainty silver of meat, nibbled, ceased. The effect was fastidiousness—if such were his aim—was by the vigor with which he pushed away his plate after each sortie.

Flora Lee, meanwhile, was rippling on in the kindly, affected manner which she had adopted for the evening; her very sweetness managed to contrast her high position with the lowliness of Dell's Landing. Her forced efforts at cordiality made it known that it was not her habit to sit at table with such as Admah's kin. Throughout she held that modest self-deprecatory air which so often marks the crudest host. Admah's heart sank. It wasn't as though he and Flora Lee as husband and wife were making the best of two poor relations. Far worse. It was one Peace against three Holtzes, patronizing them, putting them in their place.

Hunter O'Neill came in after dinner.

"The burden of entertainment fell on Admah, and why not? They were his kin, not hers. The party had no sooner separated into two camps than resentment fell every on both sides. Flora Lee could be heard laughing and chattering, her own sweet self, in the room beyond. Uncle Lefe expanded again in the presence of Brownie and his favorite nephew. He drank great quantities of Admah's cognac. Once he brought out his plug, gazed, signed and restored it to his pocket.

"I was in to see Jim Atterbury," he said after an hour of roaring philology. For this statement he lowered his voice to a faint whisper.

"What did he say?" Admah was sud-'nly calm.

"Not so much. Let's have another of them secars," he hit off an end and went it into the fireplace. "Jim's a funny cuss. Polite and smooth, always playin' poker. Regular banker. He never forgets that you're his president. Ad, he marks his tigger-heads."

"I found the T. & P. in the mud and pulled it out," said Admah. "Has he forgotten that?"

"Keen yer shirt on," invited Uncle Lefe. "No, he ain't forgot. But he's beginnin' to look round like a regular banker. The Principally owns yer business. You're a hired man. If Jim thinks you're makin' good all right—"

he's concerned, he's nothing but a bakpipe—all energy and wind. When Atterbury hears Bentley's program he'll laugh in his face. The Colonel ain't throwin' the business away just for sentiment."

"What's your program?" asked Uncle Lefe abruptly.

"I'm layin' low," Admah smiled confidently. "I've got the support of

Harlan Kinkadee and Wen Peebles. I've known Wen all my life and Harlan helped finance me in the candy business. They're pledged to back me on anything I say. And I've got you, Uncle Lefe."

"That's no lie!" roared Lefe, smiting his knee with a hand that was like one of his celebrated hands.

"I've seen Atterbury," said Admah,

"and he's promised not to pledge himself to anybody until the meeting. Then I intend to give him a show-down—tell him just what I know about the T. & P. and what I plan to do. Maybe I've been sittin' up a little late, but I haven't been asleep on the job. If anybody comes in with a better scheme than mine he's well come."

"He certainly is," agreed Uncle Lefe, and his look of satisfaction revealed what he felt.

"There's only one thing I'm going to stick for," granted Admah, "and that's the resignation of Sim Canfield."

"I guess you can suppress the mutiny without much help," decided the Captain, striving to light his cigar,

whose wrapper had loosened and hung like a tattered flag.

"Lefe!" called out Aunt Brownie from the corner where she had been dozing over the Life of Benvenuto Cellini.

"Glory be, look at the time. Ten o'clock."

"Well, the best of friends must part," said Uncle Lefe with a wise

air, as if he had just discovered the maxim. When he came to his feet the chair, having clasped its wooden arms around his bulging hips, came up with him.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

Don't fail to see the gorgeous Cecil B. De Mille production of "The Golden Bed," at the Strand Theater starting Saturday, January 31—Advertisement.

## THE NEBBES

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2-3



## THE BOOMERANG



## Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



## New York - Day by Day -

New York, Feb. 2.—One of my closest friends and confidants is a fine old gentleman who has stood the ravages of 80 winters. Most of his years have been spent in New York. He is as sturdy as an oak and as straight and tall like a sycamore.

He belies the specious reasoning that age brings intolerance. He is the most tolerant of men. His rare criticism is always impartial and not once have I heard him speak ill of his fellows. He is a man of culture and learning yet now and then he drops into slang of the day.

This to me is most appealing. He is a patron of the opera but he also goes to burlesque shows and laughs louder than anyone. The variety of his diversions keeps him young. He smokes four cigars a day with an occasional cigarette between.

One night recently I went to him with an exaggerated trifle that was bothering me. He listened patiently without a word until I had finished. Then he smoked awhile in silence. Finally he said: "You're just a damn fool!" There was no other comment. He dropped it there.

The suddenness of his remark shocked me into sound reasoning, although at first I was a little hurt. He was wise enough to know the one thing not needed was sympathy.

He has a married granddaughter of whom he is particularly fond. Twice a month he takes her out to dinner, to the play and afterward to some supper club. He is a smooth and graceful dancer, and never misses a number. I have seen him go into the dullest gatherings and soon infuse it with his contagious wit and jollity.

His attitude is particularly pleasing, for it is the fashion in New York to shunt the aged to the slippers and pipe and the chimney corner. He is one who refuses to be shunted. A doctor once told him that he must be careful about dancing too much. "At 80, if I have to die, there's no way I'd rather die than dancing," he replied.

Amid the many high spots of pleasure one sees a well-known man about town of 10 years ago. A face once handsome is now ghastly twisted. Four years ago he was in Africa. An abscessed tooth needed extracting and he was forced to visit the medicine man of an African village. The result was blood poisoning and the disfigurement.

There was a fire in a theatrical boarding house in Forty-eighth street. The boarders were sleeping soundly. A Swiss yodeler aroused them with one of his Alpine atrocities and all of them saved their belongings.

In every theatrical boarding house there is the odd character actor who has fallen on evil days. He is generally a brave soul and in his dignified aloofness discourages sympathy. His optimism is sublime. Weeks stretch into months without engagements, but he never fails to show up hopefully at the theatrical agencies. Their gentility entitles them to a better fate.

You can't beat New York for genuine gall. In one of the leading theatrical papers is a full page paid advertisement. It carries a picture of a sappy looking young man of about 20. He is in riding togs, wears a checkered vest, a boutonniere and a cigar hangs loosely from his lips. Underneath the picture is the youth's name and this: "First nighter, boy—about town, friend of the distressed chorus girl and regular feller, who has just increased his private telephone contract to 1,000 messages a month." How proud his parents must feel.

Martin Beck, the vaudeville magnet, has achieved his ambition—a New York theater bearing his name. It is a Byzantine affair and quite the grandest in town. Beck began his career as a "super" in Vienna. He succeeded to conquer, as it were.

(Copyright, 1924.)

Admah stirred as if to speak, but the shrewd old hog farmer went on. "When I hire a hand I don't like to see him blowin' his wages on a dress suit—takes his mind off his work. You remember that opera tune, 'I Dreamt I Dwell in Sim Canfield's That's a pretty dangerous dream for a young feller.'"

"Did he mention Canfield?" broke in Admah.

"Well, he didn't mention him—sort of admitted him. Ad, that election's about two weeks off, and you've got a fight on yer hands."

Admah smiled like a Tartar chief and reckoned he had.

"They'll go through the hokuspokus of an election," said Lefe, "but Jim Atterbury'll be the ballot box, as usual. He'll be there to make or break you, just by turnin' over his hand. What's that Mother Goose word? Poppa Gander. Well, there's a lot of Poppa Gander bein' used against you. Canfield invented it. I guess Uncle Sim's blamin' you for the money we lost in the Lyons & Watterhouse failure. I know you can explain when the time comes. But nothing happens but Sim Canfield runs and tells teacher. And you know how them bankers are. They can get bollin' drunk in private, but if a snappy young business man begins settin' 'em up into they can stand it. It don't look good. Not when business begins to slide—"

"T. & P. stocks are twenty-one points higher than when I found 'em," Admah asserted a little bitterly.

"Maybe so. But Canfield and Poppa Gander are at work. Sim's the boy with the keyhole eye. He knows how much you owe and how much stock you've sold—that's bad business—and he calls on Jim every fifteen minutes with a written report. And now he's boostin' Bentley for president."

"That's funny, too. I put Bentley in as publicity man, gave him a big, ter salary then he ever heard of," said Admah. "Queen Canfield took such a shine to him all of a sudden."

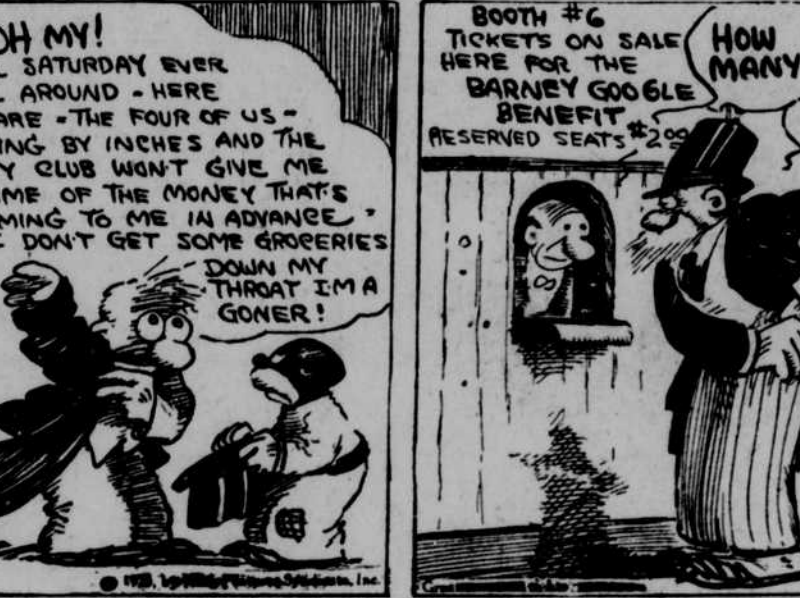
"God works in a mysterious way," repeated Lefe not irreverently.

"I don't like the Bentley idea," admitted Admah, "because I hate to be stabbed in the back. But as far as

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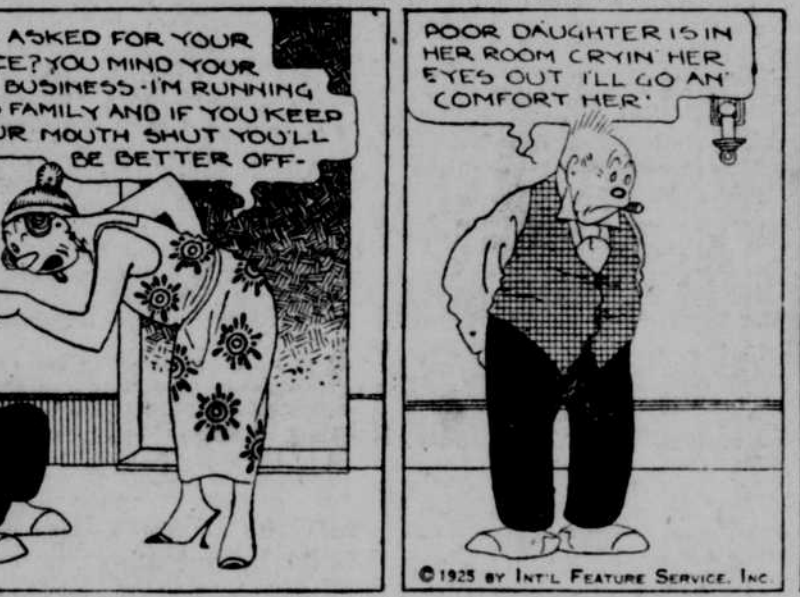
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