

THE MASTER KEY

By John Fleming Wilson

By special arrangement for this paper a photo-drama corresponding to the installments of "The Master Key" may now be seen at the leading moving picture theaters. By arrangement made with the Universal Film Manufacturing company it is not only possible to read "The Master Key" in this paper, but also afterward to see moving pictures of our story.

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They were almost to the "Master Key" mine when Dorr came to himself, slipped off the pack saddle and stood up weakly.

"What happened?" he muttered. "Nothing much," said Kane, putting his arm about him. "You had a bad fall. That bridge never was any too strong."

"Bridge?" said Dorr. "The bridge is gone!"

"Sure," said old Tom Kane easily, whistling to his burros again. "You just come along with me."

"But I haven't got my coat."

The cook looked at him with swift understanding. His coat had been in the seat of the machine and was burned.

"I'll get you another coat when we get back to camp," he said comfortingly. So they progressed the long and dusty road back to the "Master Key."

It was dark when they arrived, and Kane was able to take his dazed and much bruised charge into the cook shanty without being observed by any of the miners.

Dorr was still but half conscious and willingly submitted to being put to bed, though he still protested that he wanted his coat.

"What do you want your coat for?" demanded Kane.

John opened his eyes widely, for the first time cognizant of his surroundings. Then he leaped from the bed.

"All my money is in it!"

Tom Kane sat on the chair beside him, dth towel in hand, as a sort of emblem of authority, and demanded in his careful tones, "There wasn't anything else in the coat, John?"

He bent his white head as if to catch a whisper. Instead Dorr gave a raucous shout:

"There was that check from the mint!"

"I saw you myself give that check to Wilkerson," said the cook soothingly.

"But that doesn't change matters any. You've got to get to San Francisco, and you're busted." Tom Kane pulled out an old deerskin poke and from it spilled on the table a few hundred dollars.

"Just as soon as you get able, John," he said huskily, "you take this money and get to Frisco. Find Ruth. That's all that matters—find that little girl."

"Hurry!" he whispered. "Wilkerson is gone. He's been gone since mid-afternoon."

"But I am badly hurt," said John Dorr stupidly. Then Kane understood that he must take desperate measures.

Fifteen minutes later Dorr was pounding down the road toward Silent Valley. His head was roughly bandaged, his chest had been tightly strapped with the ripped woollen blanket, and in his nostrils was the pungent odor of ammonia. He was at last awake and knew that in his pocket was a thousand dollars in gold.

An hour later he boarded the Sunset express and automatically paid his fare, bought his Pullman ticket and, notwithstanding the porter's earnest inquiry as to his injuries, went to bed as silently as he arrived in San Francisco a day later.

Exultant in his triumph, Wilkerson stifled the small voice of his conscience and strode on. One thought now mastered his every action—he must reach San Francisco and Jean Darnell.

Jean Darnell! The woman who stirred him to the depths of his innermost soul.

Jean Darnell and the "Master Key!"

Arrived at the station he sent her a wire telling of his coming. Two minutes later he was aboard the train. As he gazed backward a bend of the rails drew a curtain to his musings, and he turned and entered the car.

Upon their arrival in San Francisco Mrs. Darnell acted upon her decision made during the journey—that they would stop at a less pretentious hotel than the St. Francis, where the chances of her plans being spoiled by chance meetings with the real Everett or perhaps John Dorr were too great. And so they took a taxi to the Manx.

A word with Drake and the older woman stepped to the desk and in a firm, bold hand wrote:

"Mrs. Darnell and daughter, New York."

Quickly she turned to Ruth and, following the lead of the bellboy, escorted her toward the elevators.

No sooner had they removed their wraps in the luxurious apartments than, a rap at the door interrupted their talk.

"See who it is," commanded Mrs. Darnell to her maid.

The latter returned with a telegram from Harry Wilkerson saying that he was on his way and would join them soon.

Wearied by the long trip across the continent, Ruth was glad to retire early, and shortly after the dinner hour she was tucked in her bed and sleeping soundly.

Drake hastened to the depot and met Wilkerson, driving him to the Manx with all haste.

"I'm awfully glad to see you, Harry," was the effusive greeting he received from Jean.

His heart pounded with the joy of it! After all his scheming and plotting was worth while. He would win the mine and the woman also.

The mine! The "Master Key!"

The thought brought him back like the snapping of a whip.

"Where is the girl?" he asked almost brusquely.

"In there," and Mrs. Darnell pointed to the curtains dividing Ruth's room from the other.

Wilkerson started toward the archway.

"Harry!" He turned.

"You mustn't go in there."

"Why not?"

"She's sleeping—you'll awaken her."

"Oh, all right!" He paused and looked from Drake to Mrs. Darnell. "Well, let's get down to business. Where are the papers? Have you got them yet?"

"Ssh! Not so loud!"—and Mrs. Darnell looked apprehensively toward the heavy plush hangings.

"Oh, that's all right, Jean. But we must hurry this thing up."

In her bed Ruth stirred. The murmur of voices came to her as in a troubled dream. Whose were they? Where had she heard that voice before? The

heavy one? She turned on her side and the moonlight shone on her in a white light.

"I tell you, Jean, you must do as I say! If we want to get possession of those papers and secure the mine we must act!"

"Will you be quiet?" Mrs. Darnell's eyes blazed in angered resentment.

What were the voices saying? Ruth sat up, listened, slipped from the bed and tiptoed to the curtains.

"You'll do as I say or—"

"Harry!"

"Oh, come, old man. What's the use of all this argument?" and Drake laid his hand on Wilkerson's arm restrainingly. Their eyes met. Wilkerson calmed himself.

"Oh, all right. As you say." And he stepped to Jean and turned her around to him.

Siam! Bang!

"Hello, hello!"

With one rush the trio were upon her. Mrs. Darnell seized the affrighted girl and dragged her from the phone. She screamed.

"Stop her yelling! Stop her!" commanded Wilkerson.

"George, for God's sake, do something!"

With her hand over the girl's mouth, Mrs. Darnell held her by sheer strength, while the always cowardly Wilkerson screamed his commands in a louder tone than those of the girl had been.

Her head fell back, and her body became limp.

"She's fainted! Call a taxi at once! We must get her out of this hotel!"

In less than five minutes they were shooting down the elevator. Another quarter minute and Wilkerson, with the unconscious form of the girl in his arms, her face covered by the cape of the maid, was rushing across the lobby, preceded by Drake. Mrs. Darnell stopped at the desk long enough to throw down a twenty dollar bill.

"The girl is sick, and we must hurry her to a hospital!" she managed to gasp.

Before the dumfounded clerk or the amazed guests could stop to act they were out of the hotel and in a taxi.

The house detective sprang from almost out of nowhere and in a second was speeding after the fleeing ones, accompanied by another plain clothes man.

They sighted the first taxi as it rounded the corner of Powell and Eddy streets.

"Keep that car in sight, and catch it if you can!"

The chauffeur made answer with his foot.

As the detectives saw the course the other car was taking they both murmured, "Chinatown!"

Into the realm of the yellow man shot the auto.

Before a doorway Wilkerson stopped. Rap! Pause—rap! Rap! Pause—rap!

A face appeared as the door creaked open, the face of a Chinaman, deeply lined, the almond shaped eyes scarcely visible through the nearly closed lids.

To Be Continued Wednesday

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IF IT'S ON THIS PAGE IT'S WORTH WHILE

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STUDENTS GIVE RECITAL

Special to The Telegraph
Mechanicsburg, Pa., Dec. 21.—On Saturday afternoon a recital was given by the music students of Miss Romaine Hertzler and the following program was successfully rendered: Idyll, "Katydid," Louis A. Drumheller, Mae Kutz; "Waltz Song," German, Helen Henry; "In May," Francois Behr, Rose Heiman; waltz, "Tick-Tock," Franz Dietz, Earl Ryan; "The Fisherman and the Mermaid," Geza Horvath, Kathryn Whitcomb; "Sabbath Eve," Louis Weber, Kathryn Weber; waltz, "Indian Boy," Franz Dietz, Mary Whitcomb; "Cricket Polka," M. F. Heise, Clara Weber; duet, "Glen Waltz," Euckhausen, Pearl and Roy Meals; "After the Storm," K. Roberts, Sammie Wenter; "Serenade Waltz," Franz Opel, Susie Reynolds; "Rose Tints," Jessie M. Winne, Valeria Hershman; "Barbara Waltz," M. Greenwald, Edith Dougherty; "The Mill at Sans Souci," H. Necker, Marion Leshner; "Humoresque," Robert Eilenberg, Melva Hershman; "Little Pet Waltz," Henry M. Brainard, Monroe John; "Sunset Nocturne," M. Edward Lead, Esther De Aron; duet "Meadow Play," Mary and Kathryn Whitcomb.

WOMAN FALLS DOWN STAIRS

Special to The Telegraph
Waynesboro, Pa., Dec. 21.—Mrs. J. E. Reary was seriously injured Thursday night. She fell down a small flight of stairs, badly fracturing both bones in her right leg, severing lacerations above the ankle, and spraining her left ankle. Mrs. Reary was in the room and walked out in the hall, which was dark, and was precipitated with much force to the landing below.

TO REORGANIZE BOARD OF TRADE

Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 21.—Present officers of the Lebanon Board of Trade have decided to retire to make room for new material, and thus effect a reorganization of the body. Recently Frank P. Hammar resigned as secretary, and President George D. Krauss also announced that he would not accept reelection. Following this, the other officers decided to step down and out. Recently there was not enough members present at any meeting to form a quorum and pay the bills.

WORKMAN STRUCK BY BAR

Special to The Telegraph
Mechanicsburg, Pa., Dec. 21.—Ross Lehman, East Locust street, met with a severe accident on Saturday while at work at the D. Wilcox Manufacturing plant. He is a hammerman and a bar, which was accidentally placed under the hammer as it was descending, struck Lehman a terrific blow just above the right knee and hurled him across the room. Medical aid was summoned, and while no bones are broken there is a bad bruise which is very painful and will incapacitate him for work for some time.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE AT HERSHEY

Special to The Telegraph
 Hershey, Pa., Dec. 21.—The annual meeting of the school teachers of this district will be held here on Friday and Saturday, January 15 and 16. The Friday evening session will be held in the Hershey Central Theater, and the Saturday sessions in the assembly room of the new school building.

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CAPT. H. M. M. RICHARDS HEADS LEBANON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Special to The Telegraph
Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 21.—Captain H. M. M. Richards, of Hathaway Park, was unanimously re-elected as president of the Lebanon County Historical Society at the annual meeting, on Saturday. Former Assemblyman Henry C. Snavely and Professor Hiram H. Shenk, the latter a member of the faculty of Lebanon Valley College, were elected vice-presidents, and Dr. S. P. Hellman, secretary.

RESCUE MISSION ESTABLISHED

Special to The Telegraph
Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 21.—A Rescue Mission, of the Melvin E. Trotter variety, which exist in many of the large cities of the country, was established here on Sunday afternoon, at the Church of the Poor, which is being re-modeled for the use of the mission. The place is to be maintained by an association of laymen from the several churches and adult Bible classes and brotherhoods of the churches. The building was decided yesterday afternoon.

Christmas Suggestions

A Fine Bag or Suit Case would make a most appropriate gift either for yourself or your friend.

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