Pictures of This Story See The Motion IDEAL THEATRE, on Wednesdays and

CHAPTER VIII.

Jean Darnell's Ruse.

HIS must be Miss Gallon,"

said a pieasant voice.

Jressed in somewhat extravagant style

looking down at her out of great, taw-

responded amiably to this salutation,

though she had not the faintest idea

"I am Mrs. Darnell," said the wom-

"May I sit down? I am an

friend of your friend, John Dorr's. He

wired me that I would find you on this

train." The lie was so plausible that

Ruth merely blushed, thinking that it

was one more token of John Dorr's

carefuluess of her comfort and safety.

friends. Do you live in New York?"

"Oh, you know Mr. Everett!" cried

It was typical of the woman to whom

silken silence, occasionally allowing her

great eyes to rest on Ruth's fair face

terested. Life had taught Jean Dar-

nell a great many things, and among

them had been the great lesson of self

rather keen wits saw precisely the

Key" and his latest letters imploring

"But I can't think of naything else."

"You can combine the pleasure of sec-

ing New York with your fittle busi-

that part of it, and I shall take great

pleasure in showing you about Manhat-

"I have never been to the opera,"

Mrs. Darnell turned very slowly and

for the first time in many years reveal-

ed a secret thought: "Do you know that

my only pleasant memories, my dear,

The bitterness of that confession.

with all its implication, wholly escaped

Ruth's sensitive but inexperiences

mind. Yet there was something in the

tone that warmed her heart to this ef-

fulgent creature. At least, she was

not going into the great city all alone,

nor confront Mr. Everett by berself.

When they arrived the next morning

duced her to a stim, rather handso

young man, who seemed ill at ease uu-

don't just like this game," he said.

"In the first place, Everett is a big

stand what you are trying to do, Jean.

"I don't notice you holding any

trumps in your hand," she returned

gently, but with a faint gleam in her

eres which made him draw back.

"This is my game, and I expect you to

play your part. You come on now and

be George Everett. The girl is as ig

norant as a pigeon. Remember what

"Yes, the stock. You understand

that she came to New York simply to

raise money for this mine. You are

supposed to handle the bustness for

her, If you don't leam all that is t

more than the foot i take you for."

be learned about The Master Key

She drew him back to where Ruth

stood amid the suit cases and band

bags and said, "Miss Gallon, Mr. Ev

erett has been leiling me that he, too,

play his hand for him?"

was competently protected.

are of myself?"

but when I do go I must go all alone."

with an assumption of affection,

Everett I beard from John.

who the woman was.

sit down.

"Yes, I am Miss Gallon."

Buth looked up to see a

woman of florid beauty and to find the clusive taxi.

Wilkerson the Plotter." HEN he had thoroughly learnhad received from Jean Darnell in New York, telling him of her willingness to finance ber scheme, determined he must be friends with John Dorr, at least outwardly. So he smoothed out the visible wrinkles in his face, trying to veil the malicious gleam in his eyes, and spent two days quietly trying to show his amiability, not only to the miners, but to Dorr himself.

Wilkerson was absolutely certain that his old partner, Thomas Gallon, had really made a rich tind and that he had lost the location and accepted "The Master Key" as a substitute in the hope that by working it thoroughly he might find the mother tode. In other words, careful manipulation or



"Look here, Wilkerson, maybe both of us have made a mistake."

the present mine, painstaking toll to figuring out the trend of the various velos, would lead to that particular pot of gold which had been at the end of Gallon's youthful rainbow of hopes. Wilkerson was determined to be masfer of "The Master Key." He needed the skilled pid of John Dorr with his

engineering knowledge. John Dorr knew that there was a fremendous secret in Gallon's life represented by the golden key which be had torn from his neck and handed to Ruth when he was dying. That key had figures on it. He understood that those scratches on that golden surface represented something tremendously Important, and that the old man had committed Ruth to his charge and had spoken of Wilkerson as his former

partner and said, "Wilkerson knows." What was it that Wilkerson knew? It was better, thought John, to accept his amiable advances and thereby possibly gain his confidence and find out for Ruth's sake that secret which to do about that new tunnel," he said

So on the second day after the resto- | thing I can't finish." ration of the old scale of wages and his own scappointment as engineer in charge John went down to the office and said bluntly: "Look here, Wilkerson, maybe both of us have made a mistake. I'm sure my only aim is to help out in the promotion of 'The Master Key."

Wilkerson received blm amiably. "I'm sure my only interest in this business la to fetch into good ore. All that we are digging out now is dirt without any pay tu it."

"I think I know where we can strike first class stnff," Dorr returned, "There is sure pay rock if we travel south from that main tunnel. We may have to go a couple of hundred feet."

Wilkerson looked at him shrewdly. "That will cost money," he remarked. "But I'll take this up with Ruth."

John looked at him with a faint trace of the old enmity in his eyes. He did not like to bear the first name of the mistress of "The Master Key" on those

"If the mine is not paying it's up to us to make it pay," be remarked.

When Wilkerson entered the bungalow Ruth perceived a great change in his attitude. He was no longer sulten, and he was evidently worried. It was a clean worry, and she smiled at him, Had not ber father come in with that expression on his face many times? She put her chin in the cup of her hands and asked cheerfully, "What is Mr. Wilkerson?"

She metioned to a chair, and he pulled out of his pocket a paper covered

"I think you ought to know how things are going along, Miss Gallon," that the responsibility was so beary as It to We are nid making any money, We are tosing money. You can see by The reports which I have here that our | you over in the motor truck heading littely has been the less than | we fille to Shell Valley?" our expenses, and our last one showed practically nothing. . We must find the | said timidly, and with that your again. To no so we must have quential logic which maideny have she nester there is no money in The

Master Kay myge." "But a what father used to se sometimes," said Rath quietly. DE BUTTON EUT IL

hope that you don't think that I'm not doing my best I am John Dorr and I have gone over this matter together He agrees with me that we have absolutely lost the vein and that if 'The Master Key is to pay anything more

we must find it again." Ruth's expression softened at the mention of John Dorr's name. "What does be think?" she demanded, "What is the chance of finding it again?"

"If we run west, Dorr thinks," said Wilkerson slowly, "we'll recover the vein, but that will cost money, which we haven't got. Do you realize. Miss Gallon, that the pay roll here is over \$1,000 a day? Within a week I have to pay out over \$30,000 for the month, and I tell you frankly that when I have paid that there will be no more money to the account of 'The Master Key' in the bank in Silent Valley."

. Ruth realized that he was speaking the truth, even lessening the immediateness of the catastrophe, but ber distaste of the man was too great to allow her to discuss the matter with him in the intimate way which she felt was necessary. She must see John

She quickly dismissed Wilkerson and then went to Dorr's office herself, meeting bim at the doot. She bore as gift a small basket of fruit. Without preliminaries she said, "John, are we broke?"

grave. "The mine is not paying," be said briefly. "But can't we make it pay?

He laughed: then his face grew

s the matter?" "Money," said John.

"But why money?" "It will cost \$10,000 to drive that

"But Mr. Wilkerson just said be was going to pay over \$30,000 to the men." Ruth said soberly. "If we have that

new tunnel," John added as they en

much money, why can't we"-A tenderness flooded Dorr's eyes. He comprehended her belplessness, understood why old Thomas Gallon had been so insistent that be, John Dorr, should look after her. She was a mere child. He tried to explain the exact situation. with the result that Ruth tinally pushed him off his high stool, got up on it berself and wrote in a large, childish hand right across the face of one of his new drawings, "I must raise \$10.

She swung around to John and asked "How can I get \$10,000?"

Dorr hesitated. His plan was risky in view of Wilkerson's attitude, but, after all, the money must be raised He said quietly: "Pledge the stock you own in 'The Master Key.' I know a man in New York who will tonn you \$10,000 on 4t," He bent over her carnestly. "But listen, Ruth, If we spend the \$10,000 and we don't find the moth er lode, you lose the mine. It's just like a mortgage on a form."

"But you wouldn't suggest this if weren't the only way out," she said briefly. "Now, bow am I to do this?" "You must go to New York and see George Everett. I will give you a let- | himself a golden image in Jean Darter to him, and he will see to it that you get the extra money, we need Meanwhile I'll keep the mine going."

Ruth gave him her full eyes, "You ion't like Mr. Wilkerson, do you?" "I don't trust him." he replied. At this moment the superintendent

entered the office and, seeing their two heads close together over the desk, he "I came to see what we are going

Thomas Gallon had taken to bis grave. | roughly, "I don't like to start in any-Ruth swung around to say quietly: "I am going to New York city to see

Mr. George Everett, a friend of Mr. Dorr's, and I will come back with the

"Everett, Everett"-repeated Wilke son, "who is George Everett?" Despite John's frowns, Ruth volubly explained. When she had finished



for have your plans ready He stamp

M're merer been to New Y added, "Let's ride. I'll take Patsy and ros can ride Black Joe."

at all that e fearing ber bome fo trange city she wished he Hast bours

Wikerson flushed "Miss Gation, I to be filled with sunshine and a famil iar zest of sepreving over dry Californin on half broken horseflesh.

"All right, we'll ride," he said "While you are getting ready I'll write a letter to George Everett" Ruth laid one slender hand on John's

"You're always doing things for me, John," she said simply. "Some day I'll do something for you." She slipped away without a backward glance.

Dorr watched her trip down the bill toward her own little bungalow, and it seemed to him as if he held one end of a golden thread that she was spin ning through sunshine. It was anchored in his heart. That thread would be 3,000 miles long before she saw good old Everett. He picked up his pen and wrote rapidly:

"Master Key" Mine, June -George Everett, Ill Broadway, New York

Dear George-When a young, slender brown eyed, golden haired girl walks into your office and says, "I'm Ruth Gallon," and hands you the papers that she will have in her little hand bag, please see that she gets \$10.000. Ever yours, / JOHN DORR

He would have added more. His fiper instinct told him that Ruth should be the first to put the whole scheme before the coof headed, rather cold hearted George Everett. He addressed the envelope and sealed it. Then he went to the telephone and called the station at Silent Valley.

"Bill," he said quietly after listening a moment to see if any one was on the line, "I want to send a telegram. Take it over the wire, please. I'll be down in a little while and pay you."

"Sure," floated back a cheerful voice "I wish my credit was as good as yours, ten miles away, but it seems if I have to be always present, when I ask for the Go ahead, John!" "This is it, Bill," said John:

George Everett, Ill Broadway, New York Miss Ruth Gallon leaves tonight to see you about "Master Key" stock. Meet ber and wire me on her arrivat. Take good care of her or T'll take care of you.

JOHN DORR The operator repeated the message and involuntarily adopted a little of John's savage intonation on the last four words. It woke him up to the fact that he was allowing his feelings to become public. He begun to see why it was that men looked at him strafgely at times, when it was a question of Ruth's interests. He must re-

The operator did not hang up imme diately, but said besifatingly: "Say, John, there's a wire here; just came in from 'The Master Key' mine. It ity Wilkerson could put this deal does not seem to jibe with yours. Wilkerson sent it."

"I'll play fair," said John to himself, | which she dully pondered at night. and he called back over the wire, "Bil ty, that's yours and Wilkerson's business, not mine." If he had listened to the tenor of the message directed to loose we talk about something else," Jean Darnell, in New York, be would have learned what Wilkerson was plot-

For years Wilkerson bad built up for nell. No one realized better than himself that she was a creature of appetite, a lover of silk and velvet. A woman whose eyes widened at sight of a | tan. I presente you are fond of op-Persian cat. Feminine in every de | era?" gree, womanly in none. But be himself, dominated absolutely, atterly and | Ruth responded. "I should love to go, completely by bis desires, had fallen under her spell, and he was going to win her, no matter how. It is a era must be like church-one wants to strange thing that when a dishonest go all by oneself." man finally yields to an honest passion nothing-will satisfy him but the utmost observance of the ritual of society. Harry Wilkerson's vision was of walking up the aisle of a great church

to meet his bride at the altar. Yet be had always thought of her in terms of gold; that was a contrastthe pallid, satiny, blue eyed woman, voluptuous, soft-and bis image of her built of yellow gold, dragged out of the bowels of "The Master Key" mine. This image was now before his eyes: Instead of the warm, sun blessed California hills, with their faint scent of sage and cactus, be saw a richly furnished room and breathed the odor of attar of roses. Let us not follow him in his dreams. But looking over his shoulder an hour later we read:

"Master Key" Mine, June -Jean Darnell, Astor House, New York Find George Everett at III Broadway | the porter collected their luggage Sante Fe express Raving here this evening, Introduce Drake as Everett after you have seen Everett and keep the "av" to yourself until I can arrange matty.

"I can't send this through any office near here," be though riso I guess I'll ride down to Vally Vista and hand it to the conductor. He can send it from Los Angeles."

Three dies later Ruth Gallon settled nerself in the seat of a Pullman that was foun to leave Chicago for New You She was excited. In crossing bwn from one depot to another er met her ears before-the sounds of the world's business which, oddly enough, seemed to be mostly bauled topes. The faint echo of that noise still rang in her ears. It apcalled her to think that she must dwell there; also she felt very lovely. She thought of the mine, of Tom Kane the door of his cook shanty, of the great ute bucket awinging across the culco toward the milt, of John, bend ing over his blue prints and papers; of the grave on the bill where her father my, still within the preciucts of "The Master Kev."

It had been so impressed upon her Ruth scanned bun politely. But the that her mission was of vital impor interest died in her eyes when she emotions flowed into the same channel might be a friend of John's: be might with her really keen business instinct. be the map to rescue "The Master She' pulled the key, warm from her Key" from bankruptcy, but be did not bosom, out of its hiding place and look-

looked intently until be got in the concourse. There be stopped and, with the picture still in his hand, commenced watching the faces of the people thronging through the gates under the vast dome. As he waited he frowned slightly. "Why had John Dorr sent him during business hours on a wild

busy broker and, being thoroughly and

temperamentally an actor, felt the chill

of this lack of interest and would cer-

tainly have fallen down on his part

had he not been prompted by Mrs.

Darnell. He was glad to-hasten away

The real George Everett got out of

his limousine on the corner of Vander

revolving doors; brisk, debonair, alert,

decided; with that happy style which

denies foppery and avoids surveillance.

It seemed strange that he should have

a photograph in his hand at which he

To her inexperienced eyes this woman goose chase?" He thought of this arrepresented the tremendous city to ticulately and then smiled to himself. which she was going. Her dress, her "A wild goose!" he muttered. It manner, her jewels, the evasive perbrought up darkling sunset vistas, fume that she affected were all strange lakes smooth as quicksilver under the and impressive to her. She moved evening sky, and slim, gray, beautiful over a little to allow Mrs. Darnell to birds homing downward. The frown left his forehead.

"After all it will be good to see some-"John never spoke of you," said Ruth body from out of doors," he said to simply. "I did not have the faintest notion that I was to meet any of his

Half an hour later be discovered that he had irretrievably missed the ar-"Yes, I live in New York. I bappened to be in Chicago, and through Mr. rival of the Chicago express and with his car and drove to his office. Once there he called his head clerk, an an-Ruth. "He is the man I am going to cient and fragile man, as crisp and see in New York," and she went on to bloodless as the money that passes on tell, as best she could, the gist of her Wall street, and told him to see at what botel Miss Ruth Gallon was stopping. Then be wired John Dorr: she was talking that she did not inter-111 Broadway, New York. rupt this pulve parrative. She sat in

John Dorr, "Master Key" Mine, Silent Could not find Miss Gallon at train. Am ecking for her, as it is important that the business be settled immediately. Wire a matter of fact, she was profoundly in- any possible address.

GEORGE EVERETT. Far out on Broadway, above the eightles, an operator was ticking off another message addressed to Harry preservation-the saving for berself of Wilkerson. It read: money, of comfort, of health and of 25 A West Eighty-fourth St., New York.

good looks. Now it was a question of Harry Wilkerson, "Master Key" Mine, via money, prime among them all, and her Valle Vista, Cal.: Everything all right. George met Ruth. She is now with me and waiting further chances which Wilkerson was taking. particulars. Have seen Everett under She recalled his oft repeated statements guise of prospective purchaser of stock. that there was money in "The Master

The girl is charming.

JEAN DARNELL her to belp him get control of the stock. Some houses, like some people, should When Ruth ended up with a gentle never be illumined with sunshine, and "And so I told John I'd come and see. Mrs. Darnell's residence, overlooking what I could do." the elder woman the Hudson, was of this type. Its dull, smiled gently. Times were not so good red stone front, marked by windows with her as they had been, and if Harthat seemed blind to all that went by. was not distinctive in that neighborthrough and make money for them all bood. A thousand doors within a mile it would simplify many a problem would have suggested to the passerby nothing more nor less than the great oak portals within which she lived. To "Mr. Everett will meet us at the train," she said brighty, "and then you Ruth Gallon, of course, the house can tell him off this. Meanwhile, supseemed tremendously formal and state-

ly. Within she found an atmosphere so absolutely strange and aften to all she had ever known that she shrank "Oh, you will," said Mrs. Durnell, within herself and had nothing to say until she had been conducted to her own room on the third floor and a disness. Mr. Everett will quickly settle creet maid was busy unpacking ber things. Ruth felt that society had already laid its restrictions on her. She recognized the maid as the "gown and hat" policeman.

> This silent, but exceedingly obtrusive personage having retired at last. Ruth studied her surroundings. When she had completed her survey she thought to herself that there were two things wanting. One was a silk haired Per sian cat and the other a flaming colored scarf across the bed that completed the altogether of an apartment severely luxurious. Then she tried to analyze the odor, delicate yet insistent, which she was ever afterward to associate with Jean Darnell and her experience in New York.

At last she traced it to some pallid flowers in the great green and dark red vase, whose unwholesome beauty was that of plants whose roots have never been in good, sound soit. They looked to her much like lilies, whose pads had Mrs. Darnell made ber feel that she floated on some dark and opalescent pool, viscid with odors of the night. She was still staring at these and at the Grand Central station in New sulfling their scent through widened York city Mrs. Darnell quietly intronostrils when Mrs. Darrall knocked on | ing in the mine pearly all her life since the door and entered slowly. She had changed her street gown for a negligee which instantly caught the girl's apside for a moment for a chat while preciative eye.

"You look beautiful," she said quickly. Jean Darnell turned ber tawny eyes on her and smiled faintly,

can in the city, and this Miss Gallon esn't look to me like a girl you could responded, "and-I am getting old, my long. Anyway, I can't underdear." She threw out her jeweled You must know what sort of a fellow comic resignation. Ruth laughed. Harry Wilkerson is by this time. Why "John Dorr says everybody gets of

> in New York. Don't you like him?" Mrs. Darnell looked into the clear eyes of the girl and almost failed to follow her baser instinct. But at that I know that John Dorr has red bair." loose throat she saw the heavy gold of "The Master Key." As if it had suourse I like John," she said easily. George will be here-George Everett of course, I mean-tonight, and you and he can talk the business over." "You know, we simply must have he money," Ruth returned carnestly. The mine isn't paying now, but John mows where we can find the mother lode again; then we'll all be rich."

"Ah!" said Jean Darnell. "You're illing stock, I presume?" "I own it all," Ruth returned prouly. "It's my mine. My father left it to me when he died." She did not see has beard from John Dorr about your the sullen batred that slowly fis until Jean Darnell's eyes fairly blazed. In her own room she stood a mome eathless. Then she tore off her fleecy gee in an intensity of silent rage and despair, seen only by the unexcit

ges of the god whom she had dette-It is wickedness, not virtue, which is theatrical, and at this moment Jean

Darnell flung herself into her evil pas sion with all the abandon of the trace dian, only her voice was almost inaudible: "Tom Gallon, Tom Gallon, dead though you are, I'll/have revenge!" When her fury had spent itself-and, like all physically indolent women, she could not yield long to emotion-she prepared her campaign. oy, velvet eyes. Western bred, Ruth | bilt avenue and hurried through the

First she called up George Drake and made certain that he would be at her home for dinner that evening. Then she called up two old acquaintances who were always glad to fill empty chairs at her well set table. This settled, she again sought Ruth and persuaded her from going down immedi ately to Everett's office.

"You must be very tired, my dear," Mrs. Darnell purred. "And, anyway, you know, in New York young ladies do not go about unescorted to men's business offices, and I cannot go with you until tomorrow or next day."

"That will be too late," cried Ruth. Mrs. Darnell opened ber eyes wide. as if in surprise. "Mr. Everett is coming to dinner tonight," she said soothingly. "You can talk business to your beart's content right here."

"That will be much better," said

When her hostess was gone she stood by the window trying to think more calmly of all that had happened since she had left "The Master K mine, but one thought was prominent: "What was John Dorr doing?" She recalled that there was three hours difference in time. It was now 2 o'clock in New York, and it was only 11 in Silent Valley. Tom Kane would be just making his final preparations for dinner, and she could almost smell the odor of his coffee. These homely details occupied her mind tenderly for an hour: then she caught up and dressed herself for the street again.

She bad barely finished when the maid came in with tea, followed by Mrs. Darnell.

"My child, what in the world are you going to do?" asked Jean. "Look, we'll have tea together." "I was going out for a walk," Ruth

responded. "You know I have never



"What was John Dorr doing?"

been in New York, and it seems a spame to waste this fine afternoon. Anyway, I want some fresh air." Mrs. Darnell looked at her thaughtfully and smiled presently in a way that made Ruth flush. It seemed to convict her of discourtesy to her hostess, "You had best have tea!" and

the girl obediently removed her bat and jacket and sat down. It seemed to her that the rest of the afternoon passed in finshes of such entertainment as she had never known. It must be remembered that Ruth, Hyleaving school, had not had the advantages or the society of trained, alert. smart, clever women, Mrs. Darpett was very clever and she used her ev-

ery art to keep Ruth's attention. She That night at dinner George Drake. "I am not usually up until noon," she | posing as George Everett, suddenly flushed darkly and turned to the girl int his left. "Miss Gallon," be said in hands with a sparkling gesture of half a whisper, flashing his dark eyes towatching, "I really hope that the trust you put in me you won't find misplac-

ernatural powers, the sight of that things," she said. "It all seems so key locked the door of her heart. "Of strange, Mr. Everett, and, you know. I am worried. I ought to go to the "We must get everything fixed up now. Ritz Carlton and see if there are telegrams for me, for that's where John would wire me. I'm afraid Mrs. Darnell thinks I'm awfully impolite because I want to go and make sure for myself that John has not wired.". "I'll go myself," said the false Ever-

ett, looking at his plate. "I'll go tonight. In fact, I'll go right now." He caught Mrs. Darnell's ere and said etically: "I'm afraid, my flear stess, I'll have to leave you. I have to be at the club at 2 o'clock, and, besides, I've promised Miss Gallon to go to the Ritz and get her mail and telegrams." He turned to Ruth, and she noticed a very grave look in his eyes. which she was to understand later. He bent gallantly ever her hand and lightly kissed her fingers, "You may trust me." he said.

Continued Next Saturday



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