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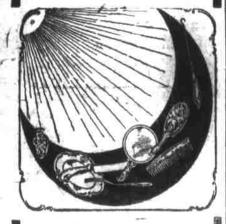
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# Time Che Grip of Evil

Author of "The Wings of the Morning," "The Pillar of Light,"
"The Terms of Surrender," "Number 17," Etc.

Novelized from the Series of Photoplays of the Same Name Released by Pathe.

ne Released by Pathe.

John Burton, a worker in a steel mill, suddenly inherits an English title and \$10,000,000. He decides he will spend his life, if necessary, in an attempt to solve the question "Is Humanity in the Grip of Evil?" Each episode of this series forms a distinct story in itself depicting his experiences in his search for the truth.

#### THIRTEENTH EPISODE

Circumstantial Evidence

Temptation.

No one who knew Grace Coe could doubt that she was really and truly in earnest, so it was all the more singular that her father, though not misjudging her character, should be a confirmed skeptic as to the success of her philanthropic schemes. Perhaps the caution necessary in handling and safe-guarding large sums of money belonging to other people tends to weaken a banker's faith in human nature.

Nor was the girl helped by the actions of her brother, George, whose folly, even more than his willful extravagance, plagued his father sorely.

The Spirit of Evil usually carries a full quiver, and more than one vicious shaft lacerated Mr. Henry Coe's skin on the unhappy day which commenced inauspiciously when he was visited by his son soon after the bank opened its doors.

"Well, dad," he cried, affecting an air of boisterous good-humor, "I hope you're feeling fine an' dandy this morning? You ought to. Stocks seem to be goin' strong."

"How much?" inquired the banker irvly.

He suspected the motive of this unusual solicitude for his well-being.

However, seeing there was no help for it, George tackled the situation with some show of bravado.

"If you put it that way, dad," he said jauntily, "I may as well own up at once. I'm in a bit of a hole this time, and want quite a stack. If only you will see me clear today I'll promise,—"

"I shall never again trust any promise of yours!" broke in his father. "You need not trouble to give me details!" he went on, seeing that George was nervously fingering a thick pile of accounts. "I have made up my mind how to treat you in the future. You will receive a monthly allowance. Since you are under no living expenses while you remain under my roof, and are worse than useless in this office, I have decided to pay you \$500 a month to clear out of the business. This sum is more than sufficient to enable you to mix in the society which I approve of. It will be credited to your account on the first of each month. Today, as a final concession, I will stake you with a month's allowance in advance. Protests are of no avail, and if you

look too sulky I warn you that the payments may be reduced by one-half."

Young Coo was fiablergasted, but

had the sense to realize that his father was talking in deadly carnest, for the time being, at any rate.

That same morning Grace Coe was trying to persuade Burton that humanity was not in the Grip of Evilnever had been—and never would be.

In view of subsequent events, it should be conceded to both that they had not the slightest reason to succept the campaign of vengeance imagurated by the "Hell-cats." The police be-



"I Closed With Him and Tried to Get the Pigtol Away."

lieved' that the criminal organization had been thoroughly disrupted by the raid. It was true that neither its leader—a wretched hag known as "Mother Flannigan," nor its most noted member, "Two-Gun Jake," had been captured. But the gang was broken up and its members scattered. Mother Flannigan's whereabouts were not even known, and Jake's accustomed haunts were no longer enlivened by his swaggering presence.

The authorities were woefully mistaken, however. The Hell-cats were not minded to take defeat so easily, and their murderous plans, though

folled bace, were soon renewed.

Grace Coe was hardly to blame it

she was blind to the hadow of impending disaster.

"I am sure you are mistaken, Mr. Burton," she said sweetly. "You must learn to think right. Implicit trust in mankind is the first onward step along the road to redemption."

"You must not imagine that no progress is made in the work of regeneration merely because you have met with failures on the way," she urged, laying an impulsive hand on his arm.

"Look at Bill Reilly's case! And Blanche Griffin's! The man was a daring burglar, yet he resisted temptation when his former associates could have extracted a fortune from you. And picture what it means to the girl to abandon forever the glare and glitter of the night clubs.

"Come with me, Mr. Burton. I will submit two of my waifs to a severe test. It may be cruel, but if they survive it they will benefit, while your cynicism will sustain a heavy shock."

John protested that he was by no means cynical, but Grace laughingly held to her purpose. She unlocked a drawer in the desk at which she was sitting, and took out a roll of currency notes. She counted the money, which amounted to quite a large sum. Then, halving it, she placed one-half on the desk and pocketed the remainder.

Crooking a finger at John, she led him into the outer hall, where Bill Reilly and Dianche happened to be seated at the moment.

"Mr. Burton and I are going out," she said to her proteges, "We shall be away a couple of hours, or longer. If you two have nothing better to do, you might take care of the office until I return."

"Where are we going?" inquired John, when Grace and he were out of earshot.

"For a spin in your car," she answered gaily.
"But is it wise to leave so much money on your table? There must

money on your table? There must have been nearly two thousand dollars in the pile. Is it even fair to tempt those people in that way?"

"If I am wrong," came the earnest

"if I am wrong," came the earnest answer, "I shall suffer the loss with resignation, and you will be strongly intrenched in the position of the superior male who can say 'I told you so.' Meanwhile, let us forget these problems for at least forty miles."

John fell in with her mood. How might any young man do otherwise? They eajoyed the run amazingly, and by some miracle contrived to talk lightly of that great world which both had seen through such very different spectacles. They were absent a good deal longer than the two hours stipulated for, but, when they came back, found Bill Reilly and Blanche Griffin seated in the office. Each was apparently absorbed in a book, and the pile of bills bry untouched on the table.

Grace chatted with her humble friends for some time before she af feeted to discover the money with as tour humen.

"How careless of me to leave those notes on the table!" she cried. "Why, if you two hadn't been here, someone might have crept in and welked off with the ! "!"

with the '.!'

It was " dia alwast an unfortunate coincidence that the girl's art less maneuver should have succeeded in the very hour when the forces of mischief were gathering within a short "fruite of the settlement building "Mother" Flannigan and her chief henchman were even then perfecting a plot which would place Burton in greater peril than he had ever before encountered during his adventurous life, while George Coe was unconsciously assisting in its development.

The young man had gone straight from his father's office to the flat in which he had installed Virginia Griffin. Blanches sister. This girl was primaring responsible for the fluancial containty are not the ways and the ways and the formal properties. The same of the fluancial containty is a state of the fluancial containty in the same of the fluancial containty and the fluancial containty in the same of the fluancial containty and the fluancial containty in the same of the fluancial containty is a supercontainty of the fluorist containty and the fluorist containty in the same of the same o

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heard a give stretche bull the validation in the to I was Con Juke as "illation" is to who has gone to my and skin a few more notes off his bath is wad."

"The "she cried, when the two werd startled by the sound of the bell, "Here he comes now! He mustn't find you on the mat, Jake!"

"Don't care if he does," growled the gangster. "If that sister of his keeps on reformin' the crowd, there'll be none of us left soon. First Bill has gone, then Blanche. You'll be the next, I suppose?"

"Sometimes you get me that mad. Jake, I want to shake you!" muttered the girl, seizing him and thrusting him forcibly into a closet, which she locked. She ran to the door and opened it.

George Coe, however, was not quite, such a fool as Blanche deemed him. He noticed instantly that there were two liquor glasses on the table.

suspiciously; "who's your friend? Is be here with you now?" " "Oh! chuck that Jealousy stuff,"

"Hello!" he said, glancing around

ried Blancks. The fed up with it. I'm too worled this morning to argos. Pave you brought the money!—that's the only thing I want to hear about."

"Guess that's so," came the sullen comment. "You don't care a cent for

"liut I do, George, really," she protested, flinging her arms around him in mock abandon. "You know I do. All the same, bills have got to be paid, and I can't find money growing on trees."

"Neither can I," muttered Coe, extricating himself from her embrace none too graciously. "The old man has turned rusty at last, Goin' to allow me five hundred a month. What do you know about that?"

"What do I know about it, indeed?" shrilled the girl. "Five hundred! And if I don't pay up five thousand before the end of the week those devils at the stores an' the garage will clean out every stick in the place an' sell the car. Now just listen to me, George Coe. No matter what happens afterward, you've got to find this little lot right away."

"I tell you I can't do it," said George doggedly. "My father won't give it to me, and no one will lend me a dime, and I can't even steal it, because I am turned out of the bank."

Virginia began railing at him through a storm of tears. She would soon have been in hysterics, but an unforeseen diversion came from Jake, who unceremoniously burst the frail lock of the closet and bounced into the room.

George Coe, who was no coward, would have tackled him then and there, but the gunman leveled a wicked-looking automatic pistol at his breast.

"You stand just where you are, Mr. Coe," scowled Jake, "or I'll drill a hole through you. When you've got your breath back, an' your heart stops jumpin', pick up that telephone an' tell your sister to bring the money here. She's got it, and you've got to have it, and so have we, and that's all there is to it."

A Useless Sacrifice.

Still chattering aimlessly about matters of no import—her object being to dissipate any notion in the minds of the assistants that she had purposely put a strain on their loyal-ty—Grace Coe was replacing the bundle of notes in a drawer of the roll-top desk when a telephone on the table clanged insistently. Blanche happened to be nearest the instrument, and an-

swered the call. She handed the receiver to Grace.

"Your brother wants a word with you, Miss Coe," she announced.

Silence reigned in the room while Grace listened. Grace's eyes dilated with fear and a note of terror crept into her voice as she turned from the instrument.

"My brother is in some trouble. He says he has been injured. He asks me to come at once."

"Now, in the quick turmoil of the moment, Burton might have hurrled the distraught girl to the waiting automobile without another spoken word, but his downright temperament called

or full knowledge before he acted.
"Is your brother at your home, Miss oe?" he asked.

"No, no; he gave me a strange ad dress. He is in someone's apartment at 425 Olive street."

Blanche Grilla, who had started to ber fort at the first contion of George to a name, secured to shrink at hear-

Office = -f1" she repeated in a = 6 way. "199 Mr. Coe mention the number of the apartment?" "250-54" and Grace.

"Why, that is where my slate: Byes?" quayered the other,

"Your states" broke in Relly, and the was the his voice which drew a er theil from from Parton.

thing, and The sorry for Blanche, but you've not to know the facts before you stir out of this house. Your own brother has rented and furnished that apartment for Virginia Griffin, and she is in with the Hell-cats hand and

"But he spoke to me himself,"
wailed the red frantically. "Surely I
know my him her's voice? And I am
coming he is furt. The way he spoke

the second that."



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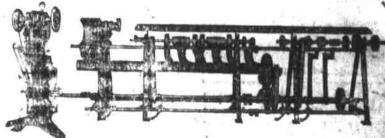
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