

THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST

ADAPTED FROM THE METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICTURE

By BEATRICE FABER

Summary: It is the year 1850 and Mary (owner of the Polka Saloon in Cloudy, California) is in a dilemma. Sheriff Jack Ramerrez, who is in love with her, had sent his deputy to accompany her coach but Ramerrez had overruled them and held up the stage's passenger. However, he has not robbed the stage at the church and the Governor's man has in his hands. An officer comes to escort her and she is unaware that the man is Ramerrez who has stolen a uniform for the occasion.

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Chapter Two

Completely at ease, Ramerrez smiled. "Not only am I to escort you but I was to see that you have every special attention." He added casually, "that last was my own idea."

Mary's color rose. "Thank you," she said tremulously. "How did you ever know me, Lieutenant Johnson?"

He bowed. "I was told to look for the most beautiful lady in Monterey and for once, his Excellency was right." He had given up trying to analyze the impulse that had led him into this daring masquerade. To Mosquito, he had merely said cryptically, "we are going to Monterey to put the beautiful imperious Senorita in her place."

Outside, Mary looked at him in quiet astonishment as he led her up to three carriages waiting in a row. "You see Senorita, it is a problem. That horse, harnessed to the first carriage is a tired old fellow. He'd probably take us straight to the Governor's mansion. The second horse is a year or so younger but—no imagination. A turn or two around the Plaza and then—the Governor's mansion."

Mary smiled as the plot dawned on her. "And the third carriage?"

"Ah Senorita, this is the Carnival carriage. The horses are young and reckless. They like the narrow, crowded little streets. They prance to the music from the gay cantina. They are very sensible."

Mary looked at him, her face radiant. "Sounds like a dare." Then, "and—I always take a dare, Mr. Ramerrez."

Their progress through the town took them through narrow streets crowded with gay celebrants. Finally the carriage stopped and Ramerrez bore her in strong arms to a tree-fringed knoll where the surf broke just beyond on the rocky beach.

Sprawling beside her, she asked quietly, "what are you thinking about, Golden Hair?"

She said, unhesitatingly, "about all those beautiful things you've told me. That my eyes were like two spoonfuls of the Blue Pacific that my lips were as red as May wine—"

"Then what's the matter?"

"The trouble is you've told them too often before."

"Never!" A pause. "Well—hardly ever."

They both laughed and then, because it seemed the only thing to do, Ramerrez put his arms around her suddenly and crushed his mouth to hers. Mary felt a mercurial thrill race over her and her lips seemed to take flame.

The next instant though she pulled back and her hand shot out and slapped him square across the cheek. Whirling up in front, she lashed the horses. The carriage jolted and as the driver rolled to the ground, she rode off into the night.

The Governor's Rancho was gay with lights and music as Mary ran through the patio door. Ignoring them all she dashed straight for the Governor and made belated apologies. Then, a few moments later, her spirits soared as the rhythmic, exciting dance of the Mariachi began. She walked to the balcony and the song mounted irresistibly to her lips.

"Remember me?" a voice said close beside her and she whirled around. It was Lieutenant Johnson. He leaned close. "I'll never forget you. Will you forgive me?"

For answer she bent into the quick cadence of the song again. These eyes closed been and to answer they sang of youth and love and laughter.

The last note lingered in the air as Ramerrez noticed a group of officers slowly approaching. Snatching the girl's hand, he kissed it fervently. "Adios, Senorita. Till we meet again." Then, leaping from the balcony to his horse below, he dashed from sight.

All that night Mary thought of him and a week later, back in Cloudy, as she reclined on the grass in her favorite sylvan glen, the memory of him was just as bright and burnished as ever. How foolishly he had looked as he'd bent and kissed her hand. She wondered what the books said about love. Did the real thing sort of creep up on you or did it hit you like a thunderbolt?

"Mary!" came Jack Rance's ringing voice and she sprang to her feet with almost a feeling of guilt. Flushing aside a shrub Rance appeared regarding her with disquieting interest. "You know Girl you've been mighty hard to find since you came back from Monterey."

"I hadn't noticed it." He frowned, then looked away. "Mary, I've got a plan in mind and there are a few questions I'd like to ask you. What did that fellow Ramerrez look like? Would you know him if you saw him again?"

Her straight brows drew together in thought. "Gee, I'm afraid not, Jack. He had his face mostly covered. But I could tell by his lingo that he's either Spanish or Mexican. Why?"

"I'm goin' to get him." His words were staccato. "I've given orders that all gold from the mines stays in Cloudy. We're keeping it at the Polka. Ramerrez has already discovered that there's no gold coming out—and we've spread it around that you're banking more for the boys than Wells-Fargo could carry in a month. I think he'll be interested enough now to want to find it."

She looked at him proudly. Gee, Jack had enough brains for ten men. This Ramerrez was up against plenty if he really had the nerve to come to Cloudy.

As it happened, the handsome Lieutenant garbed again in his Mexican dress, was at this moment laying away some hours in a small canyon near the bandit camp. In his hand he held a poster, offering "ten thousand dollars for the capture of Ramerrez."

"You see, Mi Capitan," Mosquito was saying gleefully, "now they give you a raise. You are worth twice as much to them. By Golly, everybody in California, they look for you. What beg success you are." He peered at the silent Ramerrez. "What's wrong with you lately, Mi Capitan?"

Ramerrez looked up interestedly. "Have you noticed it too?"

"Eh. We hold up five stage coaches these week and get no gold and yet you do not get mad."

Ramerrez lay back on the grass. What was the matter? When a bandit is hunted and yet no answer—did that mean he was in love? Or when he thought of a pair of melting eyes and then found his stomach sort of winking at him. Or when he looked at a canvas, and thought he saw a beautiful red rose?

He jumped up impatiently. This was ridiculous. It was time he got back to business. Quickly he reviewed the plan he had outlined the evening before, for holding up the Polka Saloon in Cloudy. Dressed inconspicuously as a traveler he would go into the place alone. Mosquito would ride into the town as "Ramerrez" and with the posse chased him, the Captain would close the shutter of the Polka window which would be a signal for Pedro and his men to invade the saloon.

"All right Mosquito, let's get to the camp and get started."

"Yes and Mi Capitan, when we get to work, you forget the Senorita, humm?"

"Forget her?" Ramerrez said calmly, "I never even think of her." Then, mounting his horse he looked up at the sky and murmured, "I wonder where she lives."

Just to be able to see her again. That is, he told her. There's a lot of money here and with the boys out chasing Ramerrez I'm not going to take any chances."

Ramerrez felt his breath pump in his lungs. "Yes, it would be too bad if Ramerrez circled back here."

Mary swung around. "It might be too bad for him too. Because he'd have to take me before he could take this gold in here."

"Is it your money?"

"Most of it belongs to the boys."

"That's different."

"No it isn't. I've got a personal interest in it. You see, she said as he looked at her inquiringly, "I know how hard they work to get it, how they eat dirt, sleep dirt and breathe dirt and it isn't just for themselves either. There ain't a one of them that hasn't got someone back home that they're working for. And I don't think this Ramerrez is so smart. If he was he wouldn't be stealin' from people comin' out here to make their homes, to build up the West. If he was smart, he'd know men don't have to rob and kill like wolves to live."

There was a queer pause as Ramerrez stared at her. Then he made his decision. He would not give the signal. "Look, Golden Hair," he said, talking rapidly, "the Sheriff's given me just one hour with you. Let's spend it. You see, the fragrant night air brought them to Mary's favorite spot, the glen beside the mountain stream. They didn't speak for a moment—just let the magic draw them together in a sweet, ineffable closeness."

Then he said huskily "Golden Hair, it's been wonderful seeing you. And to think that tomorrow I'm liable to be far away from here."

She asked with a breathless catch, "you can come back can't you? That is, if you want to see me again?"

"I shouldn't, Golden Hair." Always, in his daring career, he had been cautious when it came to women. Now, all sorts of desires were making demands upon him. "But who is there to say what love will do?"

"Love!" Stepping back, she put her hands to her cheeks, flaming in the darkness.

Then a voice spoke out of the darkness. "It was Nick the bartender. 'Oh, sorry to kinda interrupt you Miss Mary but the Sheriff just got back and he's lookin' for you. Gosh, is he bollin' mad on account of Ramerrez givin' him the slip.'"

When Nick had gone, she whispered, "I guess you gotta be wise now account of Jack. I wouldn't want to see no trouble between you."

He took her hands. "Tomorrow night, Golden Hair. I'll be at your cabin." He brought both her hands to his lips and the caress seemed to find its way to her toes.

"But tonight I'll say tomorrow," she told him.

"And all tomorrow I'll say to-night."

(To be concluded)



Privott, of Rocky Mount, spent the week-end with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dan Privott.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Wiggins and family and Louis Wiggins, all of Ahsokie, visited Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey Privott Sunday afternoon.

Miss May Belle Edwards spent the week-end at her home at Whaley-Edenton, spent Sunday with Mrs. W. W. Bunch.

Eugene Perry spent the week-end with his parents at Colerainville. Her friends regret to know of the serious illness of her father.

Mrs. W. A. Perry spent Friday afternoon with her sister.

Mr. and Mrs. Gib Harrell and children and Mrs. Smith, of Norfolk, Va.; Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Leary, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Hollowell and son, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Hollowell and daughter visited Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hollowell on Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Hollowell and son, of Green Hall, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hollowell.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Hollowell and son visited Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Harrell, in Brayhall, Monday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hollowell and son spent Wednesday in Greenville with Mr. and Mrs. George Jordan.

Misses Geraldine and Frances Perry had as their guest Friday afternoon Miss Vashti Bowman.

Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Wilson, Miss Louise Wilson, Calvin and Curtis Wilson, of Chapanoke, visited Mrs. Z. W. Evans and Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Evans Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wiggins, of Ahsokie, spent Monday afternoon

CROSS ROADS

Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Hobbs and sons visited Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Winborne Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Umphlett, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Umphlett and baby, of Perquimans County, visited Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Hobbs and Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey Privott Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Elliott visited friends at Colerain on Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Dail and children visited the Fish Hatchery, near Edenton, Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Hobbs and sons visited Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Dail Sunday evening.

Misses Bonnie Lee Leary and Elsie Bunch, and Preston and Russell Nixon visited Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Ralph at Corapeake, Sunday afternoon.

Mrs. Lee Leary spent Sunday afternoon with Mrs. Wayland Perry.

Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Overman, of Gatesville, spent Sunday with Mrs. Overman's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Perry.

Mr. and Mrs. Hallet Hurdle, Miss Margaret Perry and Woodrow Hoyer visited Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Turner, in Norfolk, Va., Sunday afternoon.

Mrs. J. R. Perry and Mrs. L. F. Overman visited Mrs. Wayland Perry Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Perry, Eugene Perry, Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Hollowell, Jr., and daughters spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Perry and children.

Miss Annie Belle Privott, a student at E. C. T. C., Greenville, and Earl Ahsokie, spent Monday afternoon

guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey Privott.

Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay Evans and sons visited Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Elliott Sunday evening.

The many friends of Mrs. Lindsey Privott will regret to hear that she is very ill.

Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Hollowell and Norman Hollowell visited friends at Whaleyville, Va., Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. S. R. Burch, of Baltimore, Md., spent the week-end with Mrs. Burch's mother, Mrs. W. W. Bunch.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Hollowell and little daughter, Mr. and Mrs. John F. White and daughter, Carolyn, of

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CENTER HILL

Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Turner and two children, Robert and Peggy; Mr. and Mrs. Willie Byrum and daughter, Shirley, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Copeland, near Edenton. Mrs. Elbert Bunch has returned from Norfolk, Va., where she visited her son, T. N. Bunch, and her daughter, Mrs. Oscar Parker.

Mrs. Annie Twine visited her mother, Mrs. Lizzie Bunch, and Mrs. Ida Reed on Monday.

Mrs. Nearest Jordan and children called to see Mrs. Willie Byrum on Wednesday afternoon.

Miss Josephine Jordan has returned to her nursing duties in Washington, D. C., after visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Jordan, for some time.

Miss Lucy Myers White is visiting her aunt, Mrs. O. E. Lane, in Elizabeth City.

Mr. and Mrs. Roland Winslow and little daughter, Ruth, of Elizabeth City, spent Sunday with Mrs. Winslow's mother, Mrs. J. M. Turner.

Mr. and Mrs. Nearest Jordan and children visited Mrs. Jordan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Dail, near Hertford, Sunday.

Mrs. Norfleet Jordan and Mrs. Wayland Jordan visited Mrs. Silas Goodwin and Miss Tommie Goodwin Saturday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Willie Lamb and son

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ACT — NEWS

Saturday, April 30—

Dick Foran in

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ZORRO RIDES AGAIN No. 10 — OUR GANG COMEDY

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Wayne Morris in

"LOVE, HONOR AND BEHAVE"

Monday and Tuesday, May 2-3—

Constance Bennett, Brian Aherne, Patsy Kelly and Tom Brown in

"MERRILY WE LIVE"

NEWS

Wednesday, May 4—

Peter Lorre, Key Luke, Maxie Rosenbloom in

"MR. MOTTO'S GAMBLE"

ACT — COMEDY

Coming Thursday and Friday, May 5-6—

Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy in

"THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST"