

✓ PICTURE NO: MADISON 1548-G
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MAIN TITLE HER BITTER CUP. ✓

A Drama in Five Parts.

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C A S T

RETHNA CLEO MADISON.
MARY MODOUGAL ADELE FARRINGTON.
HENRY BURKE WM. MONG.
WALTER BURKE EDWARD HORNE.
FOREMAN OF FACTORY RAY HANFORD.
BOARDING HOUSE WOMAN. LULE WARRENTON.

S Y N O P S E S

RETHNA is a girl of the tenement district, living alone in New York City. Her whole soul's interest is in her people, -- the people of the slums, -- whose battles she fights with all her might. Her sole aim in life is to gain justice for them from the powerful ones of the earth. This spirit she has inherited from her father, who gave his life to the cause of the working-people.

Rethna's determination to rise above her poverty causes her to find employment in a factory, where she again strives to aid her people. The factory is owned by Henry Burke, a miserly hard man, whose only interest in his employees is the money which their work brings

him. He gives them harsh treatment and unsemitary conditions under which to work and there is a growing spirit of rebellion among them. He has two grown sons, Harry and Walter respectively. Harry is a spendthrift and wants nothing from his father but money. Walter is of a different mold, a fine fellow, who has through his own efforts, become a successful lawyer, much against the wishes of his father. Henry Burke wants his younger son to come into the business with him, but Walter refuses to be connected with the factory, under the existing conditions and they have a quarrel during which the father tells his sons that he never wants to see his face again.

Rethna and the foreman of the factory are the instigators of the growing rebellion among the employees. One day one of factory girls faints and Rethna and the foreman take her to Burke's office, where Rethna begs the old man to prevent such occurrences in the future by giving the workers more sun and air. Burke refuses and discharges Rethna for her impertinence. Rethna passionately declares that she is younger than he or she would beat him with her fists, but there are other ways to do it and she will find them. Harry is present, having come to ask his father for more money, and, attracted by the girl's spirit and beauty, he follows her out and asks if he can help her. She allows him to take the sick girl and herself home in his car. There he views her sordid surroundings and asks her if she wants to leave it and have a chance to help her people and she calmly answers "Yes".

Later, - Rethna is seen presiding at gay parties in her beautiful apartments, but her heart is still with her people. She spends her time with them and most of the money she gets from Harry goes to give

them comforts. Harry, driven to desperation by her unresponsiveness to his now real affection and his failure to provide the money she constantly demands, has begun to use morphine. His father has stopped supplying him with cash and he appeals to Walter, who has pity on him and gives him money. Harry buys Rethna a present and when he takes it to her, she quarrels with him because he didn't bring her money instead, and Harry leaves. He has provided a tutor for her and she has progressed rapidly in her studies. She still occupies her apartment and continues her work among the tenement people.

Walter Burke, now district attorney, goes down into the slums to "get a line on" a gang of toughs and he is shot at by members of the gang. Rethna, coming out of a tenement, gets in range and is slightly wounded in the shoulder. Walter takes her to her home in his car and when he phones for a doctor she learns his name. Rethna immediately determines to finish the work she has begun by playing Walter as she did Harry, if it is possible for this one of the "other ways" by which she is going to "beat" Henry Burke. She recovers quickly from her wound and continues her activity in planning with the foreman, the campaign against the factory owner. Walter's interest in her grows and about a month after their first meeting, he proposes to her and she accepts him.

Some time later, married to Walter, who loves her deeply, Rethna's thought is still nothing but money, - money for her suffering people. The foreman comes to her unexpectedly one night when her husband is out and tells her he must have more money to carry out their plans. She has no money, but finally thinks of some jewels she has, Walter's present to her, and decides to give them to him. She goes upstairs after them leaving the foreman standing at the foot of the stairs in the dark. In the meantime, Walter returns, and the foreman,

hearing him coming, steps out thru a long window onto a balcony. Walter comes into the dark hall and sees the foreman's shadow on the floor, then hears his wife on the stairs. He stands still in the spot where the foreman had stood and Rethna comes down the stairs and puts the box of jewels into his hand, thinking he is the foreman. Walter switches on the light, takes in the situation and springs on the balcony, but the foreman has fled. Walter demands an explanation, but she only laughs and says: "You poor fool", --do you think I married you because I loved you? Walter believes she has been untrue to him and she leaves him dazed and grief-stricken.

Later she is shown entering the factory with the foreman to make one last appeal to Burke to better conditions in the factory. He refuses to concede anything to them and the foreman orders the workers to walk out. They do so and Burke follows them to the door and shouts at Rethna: "This is your work, and I'll have the law on you for it!" This enrages the already seething mob and they begin throwing rocks at Burke. He retreats to his office and in his extremity, phones for his son Walter. The stones begin coming through the window and the old man falls with an attack of heart failure, just as a brick strikes the oil-stove, tipping it over and setting fire to the room. Rethna sees the smoke and runs into the building. She is trying to drag the old man out when Walter drives up and seeing the fire in the office, rushes in and meets Rethna with his father. They take him out thru the back window into Walter's car. As they are driving away, a flying stone crashes thru the car window and strikes Walter on the head. Rethna takes him in her arms and orders the driver to go to Walter's home. Walter isn't seriously injured and when he recovers, Rethna makes up her mind to tell him everything about

herself. She goes to where he lies on the couch in the library and kneeling beside him, begins her story.

Meanwhile, Harry, fortified by dope and almost crazed with jealousy, has traced Rethna to Walter's home. He creeps up and peers through the window at them as Rethna is making her confession. Then his insanity overpowers him and he seeks entrance into the house. Her story finished, Rethna rises and moves slowly out of the room, leaving Walter dumb with anguish and unable to comprehend that Rethna had belonged to another, --his brother. Rethna wanders down the hall and into the dining-room. Harry has crept around the house and sees thru the window. He goes to the dining room door and demands entrance. When she lets him in, he grabs her by the throat and forces her back against the wall, threatening to kill her. She is passive, not seeming to care what he does to her. Even telling him to go ahead and take her life. He grasps a candle stick on the side-board to strike her with, and as he pulls it toward him, he overturns a box of nut-picks. One falls and sticks in the floor and as he sees this and Rethna, standing against the door with arms outstretched, he is struck with an insane idea. Grasping the candlestick and nut-picks, he nails her hands to the door and starts to nail her feet, but before he can do so, the horror of his act comes over him and he staggers to his feet and rushes out.

Through the long night Rethna heeds not the torture of her body in the anguish of her soul. She sees herself as she really is and knows that without her husband's love the future holds nothing for her. Walter, too, has suffered during the night and with dawn comes the realization that he loves Rethna and wants her, no matter what her past has been. He goes to her room and on his way, stops to see his father, who says, with a feeble, though peaceful smile: "I was all wrong but I am all right, now." Walter passes on, but not finding Rethna in

her room, wanders through the house and finally comes to the dining room. Meanwhile Harry, in his room, is awakened from his stupor by a terrible dream and realizes what he has done. He rushes out and makes his way to Walter's home. Walter has released Bethna and carrying her to the library couch, tries to get her to tell, who committed the fiendish deed. She will not tell him, but as he looks up he sees Harry's face at the window and knows by his expression that Harry is the guilty one. Then he turns to Bethna and taking her tenderly in his arms, tells her that he understands and that the past is buried forever.

THE END