

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

A play by Frank J. Morlock

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

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Etext by Dagny

CHARACTERS:

KELCH

FILINA

HOCHY

FILINA'S FATHER

THE OWL

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

SHADOWS

SCENE I. Filina's Father's House.

FATHER: You marry my daughter! What an idea! You haven't any money.

KELCH: But I can give her love. And that is much better than money.

FATHER: I don't think so. Anyone can make love. But few can make money. So go back to your woodcutting and don't come to me with such silly requests.

KELCH: Is there no chance for me?

FATHER: Yes, there's one. Become as rich as Hochy and you shall marry my daughter.

BLACKOUT

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

SCENE II. The Woods.

FIRST ELF: Who is this youth lying asleep?

SECOND ELF: His name's Kelch and he loves Filina who is about to marry old Hochy. He's now searching for the castle of The Wicked Baron to ask for gold.

FIRST ELF: He'll never find the castle unless he asks the owl who lives in the oak tree that he's sleeping under.

KELCH: (waking) Thanks for the advice. I'll ask her. (the Elves run off)

Foxy owl
Clever fowl
Please tell me
Where to see
Where Baron Bold
Hoards up his gold.

OWL: (above in the tree) Go away, boy. Do not disturb my grief. The Baron is dead and I am mourning for him.

KELCH: The Baron is dead! Oh, dear. Then I won't be able to get any gold. Still, he cannot have taken his gold with him. So it must be there still.

Owl, owl
Midnight's fowl
Where's the castle?

OWL: Stand up, look around

Jump around.
Turn around.
Wander, wander
Yonder, yonder.
Look ahead.

KELCH: (follows the instructions and the castle appears)

OWL: Through lovely hills
The moonlight falls
There you will find
The Goblin golden
Who, since ages olden
Has ruled mankind.
Another victim
He will find.

BLACKOUT

SCENE III. The Goblin's Castle.

GOBLIN: (sitting on a pile of gold) I know what you've come for, so take as much gold as you like and go!

KELCH: But where is the Wicked Baron?

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GOBLIN: He is my servant now.

KELCH: Can I take some gold?

GOBLIN: Sure. As much as you like.

KELCH: Really?

GOBLIN: Sure. There's plenty more where this came from.

KELCH: I don't have to sign my name in blood or something?

GOBLIN: You've been listening to too many fairy tales.

KELCH: Thanks. (begins filling his pockets)

GOBLIN: May I ask why you want gold? You don't look like the type that usually comes here?

KELCH: Have you heard of Filina?

GOBLIN: Filina? Oh, yes. The most beautiful girl in the whole kingdom! Who hasn't heard of her?

KELCH: (gesturing) I want this so I can marry her.

GOBLIN: Ah! Well, here. Take this ring and put it on her finger as a wedding present from me.

KELCH: Thank you kindly. It will do for a wedding ring.

GOBLIN: Exactly. It will do perfectly for a wedding ring. Now fill your pockets with gold and that will do for Filina's dowry.

KELCH: But I really shouldn't take this. It belongs to the Wicked Baron.

GOBLIN: No, it doesn't. The Wicked Baron's dead and his gold belongs to whomever I choose to give it. All the gold in the world is mine. Take as much as you like. Need a bag? Let it never be said I am not generous.

KELCH: Thank you! Thank you!

GOBLIN: Now, off with you. Goodbye. Till I see you again.

KELCH: You'll never see me again. I'm not greedy.

GOBLIN: Oh yes I will, Now don't forget to marry Filina with my ring.

KELCH: I won't forget. Bless you.

GOBLIN: Bye bye. (aside) Sucker!

BLACKOUT

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

SCENE IV. The Forest.

OWL: (spying Kelch who enters cheerfully with gold) Oh, you've come back.

KELCH: Yes, and I've got the gold, thanks to you.

OWL: Much good it may do you.

KELCH: What a rude fowl.

BLACKOUT

SCENE V. The Forest.

OWL: To Whit! To Whoo!

KELCH: True wit I have not. Owing to my sorrow. And I go not to woo because Filina has been taken from me.

OWL: Why do you sit under my tree and cry?

KELCH: Because I'm so miserable.

OWL: What! Did you lose your gold?

KELCH: No. I took the gold to Filina's father and he agreed to the marriage.

OWL: Well then?

KELCH: But, when I placed the ring the goblin gave me on Filina's finger (weeps)

OWL: Well, young man?

KELCH: She vanished.

OWL: Ah, that Goblin. I know him well. He carried off my friend the Wicked Baron who was no more wicked than you except that he was too fond of gold. That was his ruin. If it had not been for his love of gold, the Goblin would not have carried him off.

KELCH: Why did he carry the Wicked Baron off?

OWL: Once a year the Golden Goblin makes a human sacrifice to the King of Fire.

KELCH: Why?

OWL: So the King of Fire won't invade the Realm of Gold and melt the Goblin's domain. He offered the Baron as the last victim. The next will be Filina!

KELCH: Filina! Oh, no. It cannot be true.

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OWL: It is true, quite true. The ring he gave you is a magic ring. As soon as it was placed on Filina's finger she vanished from the earth.

KELCH: It's true, it's true. She did. But where is she now?

OWL: Down below in the Realm of Gold. Tomorrow she will be given up as the Bride of the King of Fire.

KELCH: I've got to save her. What can I do?

OWL: I don't know. If your heart is strong and you aren't afraid, there's a chance.

KELCH: Oh, I'm not afraid. Do help me save her, dear Mr. Owl, please do!

OWL: I'll help you. On one condition. And that is that you never cut down my oak tree and never let anyone else do it.

KELCH: I swear to you that your oak tree will always be safe .

OWL: Then we've got a deal. Now first you must go to the Realm of Gold.

KELCH: How?

OWL: Keep your hair on and I'll tell you. The way is concealed in the trunk of this tree. Now take this phial of water.

KELCH: What good will it do?

OWL: A great deal of good! All the subjects of the Golden Goblin are mortals who are distracted by gold. That water is the water of contentment. If you touch anyone with it, his lust for gold is forgotten and he becomes satisfied with his station in life.

KELCH: Is such a thing possible?

OWL: Didn't I just tell you!

KELCH: But how will it help me?

OWL: Why, the Goblin will lose all his subjects. When he sees that, trust me, he'll make a deal quick.

KELCH: But how do humans get into the Realm of Gold?

OWL: They go in their dreams. When awake, they live on earth, but at night, in their dreams they are the slaves of the Goblin . Indeed, many of them are his slaves during the day as well as at night. Now get going or you'll be too late.

KELCH: Thanks, I'm off. (enters the tree)

OWL: There's no doubt about it. I'm a wise old owl. I've saved my tree, rescued Filina and revenged my friend the Wicked Baron. What will I do for my next trick? Beats me.

BLACKOUT

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

SCENE VI. The Realm of Gold.

(People are picking up nuggets of gold and stuffing them in their pockets. But the bottoms of the pockets are cut off so they must constantly be refilled. No one pays any attention to the other. Each has a dazed expression. Some have chains and necklaces of gold. Kelch arrives and observes. Then he sprays water on them from an atomizer like perfume. As he does so, each person ceases to be interested in gold and leaves nonchalantly. The Golden Goblin rushes in with his guards.)

GOBLIN: Just what do you think you are doing? Are you trying to rob me of my subjects? I'm going to give you to the King of Fire! Seize him!

KELCH: (as the guards rush him, Kelch sprays them with water; they stop, look confused and leave) So much for your guards.

GOBLIN: (stamping in rage) You stay away from me! Don't come near me with that stuff! What is it anyway? And what do you want? You are disrupting the order of the universe, young man. What do you want?

KELCH: Stuff it! You know quite well what I want. I want Filina. You stole my Filina from me.

GOBLIN: I stole her fair and square. She's mine now. And you were well paid for her. You took a lot of gold.

KELCH: You said it was a present.

GOBLIN: If you'll believe that, you'll believe anything. No one gives gold for nothing. Don't be a fool.

KELCH: You tricked me. I never said you could steal my future wife. I want Filina and not your gold.

GOBLIN: Is that so? Well I don't believe you. You are the first human I've ever heard say that.

KELCH: We're wasting time. If you don't give me back Filina, I am going to take away all your subjects. And you can be all alone with your gold.

GOBLIN: Wait! Wait! Let's talk. Don't do anything foolish. Suppose I give you back your Filina?

KELCH: Let's suppose that if you don't, I (gestures with his atomizer)

GOBLIN: Let's talk this over. How about a drink.

KELCH: No thanks. Looks yucky.

GOBLIN: Damn you, kid. You're a tough one. Suppose I give you back Filina? On conditions.

KELCH: I'm going to make some conditions of my own.

GOBLIN: Stop! Stop! Sure I can't interest you in a drink?

KELCH: I said no!

GOBLIN: You're a smart kid. If you'd drunk that stuff, you'd have turned into a statue. Like that one.

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KELCH: (looking at the statue) Hey! That's Filina.

GOBLIN: You still want her?

KELCH: I can't take my Filina back like this.

GOBLIN: So don't be unreasonable. She's no good to you like that, and she's far too valuable as a statue for me to give her to you . Let's make a deal.

KELCH: (obstinately) Filina is more valuable than a statue.

GOBLIN: More valuable than a solid gold statue? You've got to be kidding.

KELCH: I'm not kidding.

GOBLIN: You expect me to believe you'd rather have a woman made of flesh and blood rather than all this gold?

KELCH: Yes. That's exactly what I expect you to believe.

GOBLIN: I wasn't born yesterday. (Kelch starts to gesture threateningly with his atomizer) Okay, okay. You're a strange kid. My magic doesn't work with you. But you got to look at it from my point of view.

KELCH: What exactly is your point of view?

GOBLIN: If I give you back Filina, then I have a problem.

KELCH: What problem?

GOBLIN: The thing is: how do I pay my annual tribute to the King of Fire? See, I'd like to help you, but (gestures helplessly)

KELCH: Find a substitute.

GOBLIN: A substitute?

KELCH: Yeah. (spelling it out) S U B S T I T U T E.

GOBLIN: Okay. Where do I get one?

KELCH: Suppose I bring you Hochy? He weighs a lot more than Filina.

GOBLIN: (after walking up and down, gesturing to himself, thinking about it) Okay. Bring me Hochy and I'll give you Filina.

KELCH: What will you do to him?

GOBLIN: I'll give him to the King of Fire.

KELCH: He'll be burned up.

GOBLIN: Nah! Scorched a little. Just the bad part.

SCENE VI. The Realm of Gold.

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

KELCH: Only the bad part?

GOBLIN: Yeah. Trust me.

KELCH: In that case there won't be anything left.

GOBLIN: There's good in everybody. Look on it as if you are doing him a favor.

KELCH: A favor?

GOBLIN: You bet. Sure. Everybody should be purified. Doesn't every religion provide for it? If Hochy goes on at the rate he's going, there won't be enough time left in infinity for him to get out of Purgatory.

KELCH: Anyway, I don't see why I should care about Hochy. I hate him. He wants to marry Filina.

GOBLIN: Deal?

KELCH: Deal.

GOBLIN: Now here's what you must do. Take Filina back with you as she is. Get this Hochy character to pull off the ring that's on her wedding finger and put it on his own.

KELCH: Then what?

GOBLIN: Filina will be her old self.

KELCH: And Hochy?

GOBLIN: Hochy will be enjoying my company.

KELCH No tricks.

GOBLIN: No tricks. Word of a Prince.

(Kelch struggles to lift the statue of Filina, but she's too heavy. He winds up dragging her rather than carrying her off.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE VII. Kelch's Cottage.

(Kelch, puffing drags in Filina's statue. Her Father, Hochy and townsfolk are present.)

HOCHY: Here's the wicked magician.

FATHER: He robbed me of my daughter.

KELCH: I've brought her back. Behold!

FATHER: (inspecting the statue) It's my daughter sure enough . But she's changed into gold.

SCENE VII. Kelch's Cottage.

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

KELCH: Would you rather have your daughter alive or a Golden Statue?

HOCHY (pulling Filina's father by the sleeve, whispering) Say the Golden Statue.

FATHER: No, no! (sententiously) No gold can recompense me for the loss of my daughter.

HOCHY: But your daughter is going to marry me.

FATHER: That's true enough.

HOCHY: Well consider my preferences. I would rather have her as a golden statue. I always said she was worth her weight in gold and now she is.

KELCH: You hear what he say! I love Filina for herself. Hochy loves her for her gold. He's rather have her as a golden statue than as a real live woman. Wretch!

HOCHY: She's mine! (standing in front of the statue possessively) I have her father's word and all this gold is my own.

FATHER: (worried) What will you do with her?

HOCHY: Melt her down immediately. Into the furnace she goes.

FATHER: What! Melt my daughter! Never! You shall not have her . I'll give her to Kelch.

KELCH: Keep your word and I'll change her into a living woman once more.

FATHER: Give me back my daughter and you will be her husband,

HOCHY: No, no. The statue, I mean Filina, is my wife. Mine.

KELCH: (to Father) What do you say?

FATHER: You shall be her husband.

HOCHY: If you give him the golden st I mean Filina, I'll ruin you and the whole village. You know I can do it.

KELCH: I'll bring back Filina and I'll get rid of Hochy.

HOCHY: Did you hear that? A threat! He intends to murder me!

(Hochy hides behind the statue,)

KELCH: I'm not making any threats at all.

HOCHY: Then I'd like to know how you will get rid of me. (clinging to the statue)

KELCH: I'll buy you off.

HOCHY: I love the st I mean Filina, I can't be bought off.

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KELCH: I'll give you more gold than you ever saw in your life .

HOCHY: More than Filina?

KELCH: Yes. Will you agree to that?

HOCHY: Of course I'll agree to that. But you can't do it.

KELCH: Betcha.

HOCHY: You're on. Now what?

KELCH: Just pull that ring off Filina's finger.

HOCHY: (pulling off the ring.) Ring's off. Now what?

KELCH: Place it on your finger.

HOCHY: What's the good of that?

KELCH: Just follow instructions.

HOCHY: To humor you. Let's get it over with.

(There's a puff of smoke and blinding flash of light. When the smoke clears, Hochy has disappeared and Filina has materialized as a beautiful young girl.)

ALL: Where's Hochy?

KELCH: Gone where he won't trouble us again. Now, I marry Filina.

ALL: Yes. Yes.

(A wedding dance begins and all the characters dance.)

FINAL CURTAIN