

GOLD

SCENE. The interior of a small, dingy hut, lighted by a single tallow candle on table at left. Left front is a door, and back of door, over table, hangs a gun, dimly discerned by the audience. At back is a window with two upper panes partly broken and stuffed with rags. Near window hang a well worn coat and the remains of what was once a felt hat. At various places on the walls are seen white patches, which, on closer observation, prove to be unframed pictures. Right back is a fire-place but no fire is burning. The only other piece of furniture is a stool. The hut has only one story and in the dim light the rafters overhead are scarcely seen.

As the curtain rises, a shabbily dressed, impotent looking old man is discovered, trying to sew a button on his coat. Without, it is raining heavily and an occasional burst of thunder is heard in the distance. The sewing is continued in silence for a few moments until he rises to reach for the scissors. Just then, however, a flash of lightning brightens the whole stage and the old man looks around timorously and shudders with fright as the thunder follows. When the shock is over, he cuts the thread, picks up the candle, and goes to the fire-place. There he proceeds to remove several bricks, and, with a great effort, to take out two heavy boxes. He puts these on the floor, sits down beside them, and lifts their covers. A gleam of gold is revealed to the audience. Then he blows out the candle, but a second later, another flash of lightning shows him with his hands buried in the gold. It also shows what he cannot see, for his back is turned, and that is a face at the window. Thunder follows. There is violent knocking at the door. The old man rises hurriedly. In his confusion he is heard to drop some of the gold pieces on the floor before he pushes the boxes into their hiding place behind the bricks. Knocking again.

Voice (from without): Hallo! Hallo! Hallo, in there. I say, let me in. What's the matter with you? Hallo, I say!

(There is no response from the stage. The old man continues putting the bricks in place).

Voice (more angrily): Old Jim, I say, old Jim Dooley, are