

# RICH MENS CHILDREN

By GERALDINE BONNER  
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"TOMORROW'S TANGLE," etc.

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## SYNOPSIS.

Bill Cannon, the bonanza king, and his daughter, Rose, who had passed up Mrs. Cornelius Ryan's bail at San Francisco to accompany her father, arrive at Antelope. Dominick Ryan calls on his mother to beg a bail invitation for his wife, and is refused. The determined old lady refuses to recognize her daughter-in-law. Dominick had been trapped into a marriage with Bernice Iverson, a stenographer, several years his senior. She squanders his money, they have frequent quarrels, and he slips away. Cannon and his daughter are snowed in at Antelope. Dominick Ryan is rescued from storm in unconscious condition and brought to Antelope Hotel. Antelope is cut off by storm. Rose Cannon nurses Dominick back to life. Two weeks later Bernice discovers in a paper where husband is and writes letter trying to smooth over difficulties between them. Dominick at last is able to join fellow snowbound prisoners in hotel parlor. He loses temper over talk of Buford, an actor. After three weeks, end of imprisonment is seen. Telegrams and mail arrive. Dominick gets letter from wife. Tells Rose he doesn't love wife, and never did. Stormbound people begin to depart. Rose and Dominick embrace, father sees them and demands an explanation. Rose's brother Gene is made manager of ranch, and is to get it if he stays sober a year. Cannon expresses sympathy for Dominick's position in talk with Rose. Dominick returns home.

## CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

On the Saturday morning she went out to bed. Inquiry at the railway office told her that the train which connected with the branch line to Rocky Bar did not reach the city till six in the evening. She ordered a dinner of the choicest viands and spent part of the morning passing from stall to stall in the market on Powell Street spying about for dainties that might add a last elaborating touch to the lengthy menu. The afternoon was dedicated to the solemn rites of massaging, manicuring, and hair-waving at a beauty doctor's. On an ordinary occasion these unwonted exertions in the pursuit of good looks would have tired her, but to-day she was keyed to a pitch where she did not notice small outside discomforts.

Long before six she was dressed, and sitting before the mirror in her room she laid on the last perfecting touches with a short stick of hard red substance and a circular piece of mossy-looking white stuff, which she rubbed with a rotary motion round and round her face. Her new dress of raspberry pink crape betrayed the hand of an expert in its gracefully-falling folds and the elegance with which it outlined her slim, long-waisted shape. Her artificially-reddened hair waved back from her forehead in glossy ripples; her face, all lines and hollows rubbed from it, looked fresh and youthful. With the subdued light falling on her through the silk and paper lamp shades, she looked a very pretty woman, the darkness of her long, brilliant eyes thrown into higher relief by the whiteness of her powdered face.

She was tremulously nervous. Every sound caused her to start and move to that part of the parlor whence she could look down the long passageway to the stair-head. Large bunches of greenery were massed here in the angles of the hall and stood in the corners of the sitting-room. Bowls filled with violets and roses were set on the table and mantelpiece, and the scent of these flowers, sweet and delicate, mingled with the crude, powerful perfume that the woman's draperies exhaled with every movement. At intervals she ran into her bedroom, seized the little, round, soft wad of white and rubbed it over her face with a quick concentric movement, drawing her upper lip down as she did so, which gave to her countenance with its anxious eyes an exceedingly comical expression.

It was nearly seven o'clock when the bell rang. With a last hasty look in the glass, she ran down the passageway to the stair-head. It was necessary to descend a few steps to a turn on the stairs from whence the lever that opened the door could be worked. As she stood on the small landing, thrown out in bright relief by a mass of dark leafage that stood in the angle of the wall, the door opened and Dominick entered. He looked up and saw her standing there, gaily dressed, a brilliant, animated figure, smiling down at him.

"Ah, Berny," he said in a quiet, emotional voice, "is that you?"

It was certainly not an enthusiastic greeting. A sensitive woman would have been shriveled by it, but Berny was not sensitive. She had realized from the start that she would probably have to combat the lingering surliness left by the quarrel. As Dominick ascended, her air of smiling welcome was marked by a bland cheery unconcern of any past unpleasantness. She was not, however, as unconscious as she looked. She noted his heaviness of demeanor, the tired expression of his lifted face. He came up the stairs slowly, not yet being completely recovered, and it added to the suggestion of reluctance, of difficult and spiritless approach, that seemed to encompass him in an unseen yet distinctly felt aura.

As he rose on a level with her, she stretched out her hands and, laying them on his shoulders, drew him toward her and kissed him. The coldness of his cheek, damp with the foggy night air, chilled the caress and she drew back from him, not so

securely confident in her debonair, smiling assurance. He patted her lightly on the shoulder by way of greeting and said:

"How are you? All right?"

"Oh, I'm all right," she answered. "You're the one to ask about. You walk stiff, still. How are your feet?"

She was glad to turn her eyes away from his face. It looked very tired, and the slight smile with which he had greeted her stayed only on his lips, did not extend to his fatigued eyes. He was evidently angry still, angry and unforgiving, and that he should be so, when she was so anxious to forget the ugly episode of the quarrel and be gay and friendly again, dashed her spirits and made her feel unsure of herself and upset. She was determined, however, to show him that she had forgotten all about it, and as he turned the angle of the stairway she thrust her hand inside his arm and walked up beside him. They might have been a happy married couple, reunited after an absence, slowly coming up the stairs together arm in arm.

A few minutes later they were seated opposite each other at dinner. The little table glowed and gleamed, all Berny's bravery of silver and glass mustered for its adornment. The choice and delicate dinner began with a soup that Dominick especially liked, a fact which Berny hoped he would notice and mention. She was one of those women who have an unflinching memory for what people like to eat; a single expression of preference would remain in her mind for years. Dominick and she had not lived together for a month before she knew everything in the way of food he liked or disliked. When she was annoyed with him, or especially bitter against his mother, she would order nothing but dishes that he did not care for, and when she was in a more friendly mood, as to-night, she would take pains and time to arrange a menu composed of those he preferred. He usually did not notice these rewards and punishments, but Berny always thought he did and was "too stubborn," as she expressed it to herself, to show that he was affected by them.

She observed to-night that he neither remarked, nor seemed to relish his food, but she made no comment, talking on in a breathless, lively way, asking questions of his trip, his accident, and the condition of his feet, as though there were no mortifying recollections connected with the cause of his sudden departure. Her only indication of embarrassment was a tendency to avoid anything like a moment of silence and to fly from one subject to another. Dominick answered her questions and told her of his wanderings with a slow, careful exactness. Save in the freezing of his feet, which matter he treated more lightly than it deserved, he was open with her in recounting the small happenings of what he called "his holiday," from the time of his walk from Rocky Bar to the day of his departure from Antelope.

They had progressed through the flab to the entree when her questions passed from his personal wanderings and adventures to his associates. She had been very anxious to get to this point, as she wanted to know what degree of intimacy he had reached with the Bonanza King. Several times already she had tried to divert the conversation toward that subject, but it had been deflected by the young man, who seemed to find less personal topics more to his taste. Now she was advancing openly upon it, inquiring about the snow-bound group at Perley's, and awarding to any but the august name for which her ears were pricked a perfunctory attention. It was part of the natural perversity of man that Dominick should shy from it and expend valuable time on descriptions of the other prisoners.

"There was an actor there," he said, "snowed in on his way to Sacramento, a queer-looking chap, but not bad."

"An actor?" said Berny, trying to look interested. "What did he act?"

"Melodrama, I think. He told me he played all through the northwest and east as far as Denver. The poor chap was caught up there and was afraid he was going to lose a Sacramento engagement that I guess meant a good deal to him. He was quite interesting, been in the Klondike in the first rush and had some queer stories about the early days up there."

Berny's indifferent glance became bright and fixed under the steady effect of sudden interest.

"Been in the Klondike?" she repeated. "What was his name?"

"Buford, James Defay Buford. He'd been an actor at the opera house at Dawson."

"Buford," said Berny, turning to place a helping of peas on the plate the Chinaman held toward her. "I never heard of him. I thought perhaps it might have been some actor I'd seen play. I'd like to know an actor in private life. They must be so different."

She ladled a second spoonful of

pease on to her own plate and as she began to eat them, said:

"It must have been interesting having the Cannons up there. When I read in the paper that they were in Antelope too, I was awfully glad because I thought it would be such a good thing for you to get to know the old man well, as you would, snowed in that way together."

"I knew him before. My father and mother have been friends of his for years."

"I know that. You've often told me. But that's a different thing. I thought if he got to know you intimately and liked you, as he probably would," she glanced at him with a coquettish smile, but his face was bent over his plate—"why, then, something might come of it, something in a business way." She again looked at him, quickly, with sidelong investigation, to see how he took the remark. She did not want to irritate him by alluding to his small means, anyway on this night of reconciliation.

"It would be so useful for you to get solid with a man like Bill Cannon," she concluded with something of timidity in her manner.

Despite her caution, Dominick seemed annoyed. He frowned and gave his head an impatient jerk.

"Oh, there was nothing of that kind," he said hurriedly. "We were just snowed in at the same hotel. There was no question of intimacy or friendship about it, any more than there was between Judge Washburne and me, or even the actor."

Berny was exceedingly disappointed. Had the occasion been a less momentous one she would have expressed herself freely. In her mind she thought it was "just like Dominick" to have such an opportunity and let it go. A slight color deepened the artificial rose of her cheeks and for a moment she had to exert some control to maintain the silence that was wisdom. She picked daintily at her food while she wrestled with her irritation. Dominick showed no desire to resume the conversation, and a silence of some minutes' duration rested over them, until she broke it by saying with a resolute cheerfulness of tone:

"Rose Cannon was there, too, the paper said. I suppose you got to know her quite well?"

"I don't know. I saw a good deal of her. There was only one sitting-room and we all sat there. She was there with the others."

"What's she like?" said Berny, her curiosity on the subject of this spoiled child of fortune overcoming her recent annoyance.

"You've seen her," he answered, "you know what she looks like."

"I've never seen her to know who she was. I suppose I've passed her on the streets and at the theaters. Is she cordial and pleasant, or does she give herself airs because she's Bill Cannon's daughter?"

Dominick moved his feet under the



LAVIN—

"Really, Berny, I Don't Know," Answered the Victim.

table. It was difficult for him to answer Berny's questions politely.

"She doesn't give herself the least airs. She's perfectly simple and natural and kind."

"That's just what I've heard," his wife said, giving her head an agreeing wag. "They say she's just as easy and unassuming as can be. Did you think she was pretty when you saw her close to?"

"Really, Berny, I don't know," answered the victim in a tone of goaded patience. "She looks just the same close to as she does at a distance. I don't notice people's looks much. Yes, I suppose she's pretty."

"She has blonde hair," said Berny, leaning forward over her plate in the eagerness of her interest. "Did it look to you as if it was bleached?"

He raised his eyes, and his wife encountered an unexpected look of anger in them. She shrank a little, being totally unprepared for it.

"How should I know whether her hair was bleached or not?" he said sharply. "That's a very silly question."

Berny was taken aback.

"I don't see that it is," she said with unusual and somewhat stammering mildness. "Most blonde-haired women, even if they haven't bleached their hair, have had it 'restored.'"

Dominick did not answer her. The servant presented a dish at his elbow and he motioned it away with an impatient gesture.

Berny, who was not looking at him, went on.

"What kind of clothes did she wear? They say she's an elegant dresser, gets almost everything from Paris, even her underwear. I suppose she didn't have her best things up there. But she must have had something, because the papers said they'd gone prepared for a two weeks' trip."

"I never noticed anything she wore."

"Well, isn't that just like you, Dominick Ryan!" exclaimed his wife, unable, at this unmerited disappointment, to refrain from some expression of her feelings. "And you might know I'd be anxious to hear what she had on."

"I'm very sorry, but I haven't an idea about any of her clothes. I think they were always dark, mostly black or brown."

"Did you notice," almost pleadingly, "what she wore when she went out?" Mrs. Whiting, the forelady at Hazel's millinery, says she imported a set of sables, muff, wrap and hat, for her this autumn. Hazel says it was just the finest thing of its kind you ever laid your eyes on. Did she have them up there?"

"I couldn't possibly tell you. I don't know what sables are. I saw her once with a fur cap on, but I think it belonged to Willoughby, an Englishman who was staying there, and used to have his cap hanging on the pegs in the hall. It's quite useless asking me these questions. I don't know anything about the subject. Did you wind the clock while I was away?"

He looked at the clock, a possession of his own, given him in the days when his mother and sister delighted to ornament his rooms with costly gifts and in which he had never before evinced the slightest interest.

"Of course, I would it," Berny said with an air of hurt protest. "Haven't I wound it regularly for nearly three years?"

This brought the subject of Rose Cannon to an end and she was not alluded to again during the dinner. The conversation reverted to such happenings in the city as Berny thought might interest her husband, and it seemed to her that he was more pleased to sit and listen to her chatter of her sisters, the bank, the theaters, and the shops, than to dilate any further on his adventures in the snow-bound Sierra.

When the dinner was over, they returned to the front of the flat, where

always smoked in this room and read the papers, and presently he picked them up from the table and began to look them over. The conversation languished, became spasmodic, and finally died away. Berny, leaning back on the cushions, tried several times to revive it, but her husband from among the spread sheets of the evening press answered her with the inarticulate sounds of mental preoccupation, and sometimes with no sound at all, till she abandoned the attempt and leaned back under the canopy in a silence that was not by any means the somnolent quietude of after-dinner torpor.

The clock hands were pointing to half-past nine when a ring at the bell was followed by the appearance of the Chinaman at the door, stating that the expressman had come with Mr. Ryan's valises. Dominick threw down his papers and left the room. As Berny sat silent, she could hear the expressman's gruff deep voice in the hall and the thuds of the valises as he thumped them down at the stair-head. Dominick answered him and there were a few more remarks, followed by the retreating sound of the man's heavy feet on the stairs and the bang of the hall door. She sat looking at the clock, waiting for her husband to return, and then as he did not come and the hall seemed singularly quiet she leaned forward and sent an exploring glance down its dim length. Dominick was not there, but a square of light fell out from an open doorway of his room.

"Dominick," she called, "what are you doing?"

He came to the door of the room in his shirtsleeves, a tall figure looking lean and powerful in this closer-fitting and lighter garb.

"I'm unpacking my things, and then I'm going to bed."

"Oh!" she answered with a falling inflection, leaning forward, with her elbows planted on her knees, craning her neck to see more plainly down the narrow passageway. "It's only half-past nine; why do you want to go to bed so early?"

"I'm tired, and it will take me some time to get these things put away."

"Can I help you?" she asked without moving.

"No, thanks. There's nothing much to bother about. Good night, Berny," and he stepped back into the room and shut the door.

Berny sat as he had left her for a space, and then drew back upon the divan and leaned against the mound of pillows. She made the movement charily and slowly, her face set in a rigidity of thought to which her body seemed fixed and obedient. She sat thus for an hour without moving, her eyes staring before her, two straight lines folded in the skin between her brows.

So he was still angry, angry and unforgiving. That was the way she read his behavior. The coldness that he exhaled—that penetrated even her insensitive outer shell—she took to be the coldness of unappeased indignation. He had never before been just like this. There was a something of acquired forbearance and patience about him—a cultivated thing, not a spontaneous outward indication of an inner condition of being—which was new to her observation. He was not sulky or cross; he was simply withdrawn from her and trying to hide it under a manner of careful, guarded civility. It was different from any state she had yet seen him in, but it never crossed her mind that it might be caused by the influence of another woman.

He was still angry—that was what Berny thought; and sitting on the divan under the canopy with its fiercely-poised lances she meditated on the subject. His winning back was far from accomplished. He was not as "easy" as she had always thought. A feeling of respect for him entered into her musings, a feeling that was novel, for in her regard for her husband there had previously been a careless, slighting tolerance which was not far removed from contempt. But if he had pride enough to keep her thus coldly at arm's length, to withstand her attempts at forgiveness and reconciliation, he was more of a man than she thought, and she had a harder task to handle than she had guessed. She did not melt into anything like self-pity at the futility of her efforts, which, had Dominick known of them, would have seemed to him extremely pathetic. That they had not succeeded gave her a new impetus of force and purpose, made her think, and scheme with a hard, cool resolution. To "make up" and gain ascendancy over Dominick, independent and proudly indifferent, was much more worth while than to bully Dominick, patient, enduring and ruled by a sense of duty.

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Gods in the Machine.

On the second Sunday after their return from Antelope, Bill Cannon resolved to dedicate the afternoon to paying calls. This, at least, was what he told his daughter at luncheon as he, she, and Gene sat over the end of the meal. To pay calls was not one of the Bonanza King's customs, and in answer to Rose's query as to whom he was going to honor thus, he responded that he thought he'd "start in with Della Ryan."

Rose made no comment on this intelligence. The sharp glance he cast at her discovered no suggestion of consciousness in the peach-like placidity of her face. It gratified him to see her thus unsuspecting, and in the mellow warmth of his satisfaction he turned and addressed a polite query to Gene as to how he intended spending the afternoon. Gene and Rose, it appeared, were going to the park to hear the band. Gene loved a good band, and one that played in the park Sun-

day afternoons was especially good. The Sunday before, Gene had heard it play Poet and Peasant and the Overture of William Tell, and it was great! That was one of the worst things about living on a ranch, Gene complained, you didn't have any music except at the men's house at night when one of the Mexicans played on an accordion.

The old man, with his elbow on the table, and a short, blunt-fingered hand stroking his beard, looked at his son with narrowed eyes full of veiled amusement. When he did not find Gene disagreeably aggravating as his only failure, he could, as it were, stand away from him and realize how humorous he was if you took him in a certain way.

"What's the Mexican play?" he growled without removing his hand.

"La Paloma," answered Gene, pleased to be questioned thus amicably by his autocratic sire, "generally



He Came to the Door of the Room in His Shirt Sleeves.

La Paloma, but he can play The Heart Bowed Down and the Toreador song from Carmen. I want him to learn the Miserere from Trovatore. It's nice to sit on the porch after dinner and listen while you smoke."

"Sort of Court Minstrel," said his father, thumping down his napkin with his hand spread flat on it. "Don Eugenio Cannon, with his minstrel playing to him in the gloaming; it's very picturesque. Did you ever think of having a Court Fool too, or perhaps you don't feel as if you needed one?" He arose from his chair before Gene, who never quite understood the somewhat ferocious humor of his parent, had time to reply.

"Well, so long," said the old man; "be good children and don't get into mischief, and Rose, see that your brother doesn't get lost or so carried away by the Poet and the Peasant that he forgets the dinner hour. Adios, girls."

A half-hour later he walked down the flight of marble steps that led in dignified sweep from the front door to the street. It was a wonderful day and for a moment he paused, looking with observing eyes at the prospect of hill and bay which seemed to glitter in the extreme clearness of the atmosphere. Like all Californians he had a strong, natural appreciation of scenic and climatic beauty. Preoccupied with thoughts and schemes which were anything but uplifting, he yet was sensitively responsive to the splendors of the view before him, to the unclouded, pure blue of the vault above, to the balmy softness of the air against his face. Some one had once asked him why he did not live in Paris as the ideal home of the man of great wealth and small scruples. His answer had been that he preferred San Francisco because there were more fine days in the year there than anywhere else he knew of.

Now he paused, sniffing the air with distended nostril and inhaling it in deep, grateful inspirations. His eye moved slowly over the noble prospect, noted the deep sapphire tint of the bay, the horizon, violet dark against a pale sky, and the gem-like blues and amethysts of the distant hills. He turned his glance in the other direction and looked down the gray expanse of the street, the wide, clear, stately street, with its air of clean spaciousness, sun-bathed, silent, almost empty, in the calm quietude of the Sabbath afternoon. The bustling thoroughfares of greater cities, with their dark, sordid crowds, their unlovely, vulgar hurry, their distracting noise, were offensive to him. The wonder crossed his mind, as it had done before, how men who could escape from such surroundings chose to remain in them.

He walked forward slowly, a thick-set, powerful figure, his frock-coat buttoned tight about the barrel-like roundness of his torso, a soft, black felt hat pulled well down on his head. His feet were broad and blunt like his hands, and in their square-toed shoes he planted them firmly on the pavement with a tread of solid, deliberate authority. His forward progress had something in it of an invincible, resistless march. He was thinking deeply as he walked, arranging and planning, and there was nothing in his figure, or movements, or the expression of his face, which suggested the sauntering aimlessness of an afternoon stroll.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## How to Begin.

"What is the first step toward remedying the discontent of the masses?" "The first step," replied the energetic campaigner, "is to get out and make speeches to prove to them how discontented they are."—Washington Star.