

# The Younger Set.

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.  
Author of "The Fighting Chance," Etc.  
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(Continued from last week.)

ed to be perfectly sane, healthy in body and mind, comfortable, happy and enjoying life under the protection of a certain Captain Selwyn, who paid all her bills and at certain times was seen entering or leaving her house at Edgewater.

Excited, incredulous, but hoping for the worst, Ruthven had posted off to his attorneys. To them he naively confessed his desire to be rid of Alice. He reported her misconduct with Neergard—which he knew was a lie—her pretense of mental prostration, her disappearance and his last interview with Selwyn in the card room. He also gave a vivid description of that gentleman's disgusting behavior and his threats of violence during that interview.

To all of which his attorneys listened very attentively, bade him have no fear of his life, requested him to make several affidavits and leave the rest to them for the present.

Which he did, without hearing from

them until Mr. Hallam telegraphed him to come to Edgewater if he had nothing better to do.

Mr. Hallam was a very busy, very sanguine, very impetuous young man, and when he met Ruthven at the Edgewater station he told him promptly that he had the best case on earth; that he, Hallam, was going to New York on the next train, now almost due, and that Ruthven had better drive over and see for himself how gaily his wife maintained her household, for the Cossack sleigh, with its gray crimson tchug, had but just returned from the usual afternoon spin, and the young chateleine of Willow Villa was now on the snow covered lawn, romping with the coachman's huge white wolfhound. Ruthven drove to the villa.

There were clumps of evergreens about, tall cedars, a bit of bushy foreland and a stretch of snow. And across this open space of snow a young girl was moving, followed by a white wolfhound. Once she paused, hesitated, looked cautiously around her. Ruthven, hiding behind a bush, saw her thrust her arm into a low evergreen shrub and draw out a shining object that glittered like glass. Then she started toward the house again.

At first Ruthven thought she was his wife. Then he was not sure, and he cast his cigar away and followed, slinking forward among the evergreens. But the youthful, fur clad figure kept straight on to the veranda of the house, and Ruthven, curious and determined to find out whether it was Alice or not, left the semi-shelter of the evergreens and crossed the open space just as the woman's figure disappeared around an angle of the veranda.

Vexed, determined not to return without some definite discovery, Ruthven stepped upon the veranda. Just around the angle of the porch he heard a door opening, and he hurried forward, impatient and absolutely unafraid, anxious to get one good look at his wife and be off.

But when he turned the angle of the porch there was no one there. Only an open door confronted him, with a big, mild eyed wolfhound standing in the doorway looking steadily up at him.

Ruthven glanced somewhat dubiously at the dog; then as the animal made no offensive movement he craned his fleshy neck striving to see inside the house.

He did see—nothing very much, only the same young girl, still in her furs, emerging from an inner room, her arms full of dolls.

In his eagerness to see more Ruthven pushed past the great white dog, who withdrew his head disdainfully from the unceremonious contact, but quietly followed Ruthven into the house, standing beside him, watching him out of great, limpid, deerlike eyes.

But Ruthven no longer heeded the dog. His amused and slightly sneering gaze was fastened on the girl in furs who had entered what appeared to be a living room to the right and now, down on her knees beside a couch, smiling and talking confidentially and quite happily to herself, was placing her dolls against the wall.

Then the great white dog growled very low, and the girl in the fur jacket looked around and up quickly. Alice! He realized it as she caught his pale eyes fixed on her, and she stared, sprang to her feet, still staring. Then into her eyes leaped terror, the living horror of recognition distorting her face. And as she saw he meant to speak she recoiled, shrieking away, turning in her fright like a hunted thing. The strange doll in her hand glittered. It was a revolver wrapped in a red rag.

"What's the matter?" she stammered, stepping forward, fearful of the weapon she clutched.

But at the sound of his voice she screamed, crept back closer against the wall, screamed again, pushing the shining muzzle of the weapon deep into her fur jacket above her breast.

"F-for God's sake," he gasped, "don't fire—don't!" She closed both eyes and pulled the trigger. Something knocked her flat against the wall, but she heard no sound of a report, and she pulled the trigger again and felt another blow.

The second blow must have knocked her down, for she found herself rising to her knees, reaching for the table to aid her. But her hand was all red and slippery. She looked at it stupidly, fell forward, rose again, with the acrid smell of smoke choking her and her pretty fur jacket all soaked with the warm, wet stuff which now stained both hands.

Then she got to her knees once more, groped in the rushing darkness and swayed forward, falling loosely and flat. And this time she did not try to rise.

It was her way. It had always been her way out of trouble—the quickest, easiest escape from what she did not choose to endure.

As for the man, they finally contrived to drag the dog from him and lift him to the couch, where he lay twitching among the dolls for awhile, then stopped twitching.

Later in the night men came with lanterns, who carried him away. A doctor said that there was the usual chance for partial recovery. But it was the last excitement he could ever venture to indulge in.

## Chapter 29

ONE day is the period of time allotted the human mind in which to wonder at anything. In New York the limit is much less. No tragedy can hold the boards as long as that where the bill must be renewed three times a day to hold even the passing attention of those who themselves are eternal understudies in the continuous metropolitan performance.

As for Selwyn, a few people noticed his presence at the funeral. But even that episode was forgotten before he left the city six hours later under an invitation from Washington which admitted of no delay on the score of private business or of personal perplexity, for the summons was peremptory and his obedience so immediate that a telegram to Austin comprised and concluded the entire ceremony of his leave taking.

Later he wrote a great many letters to Eileen Erroll, not one of which he ever sent. But the formality of his silence was no mystery to her, and her response was silence as profound as the stillness in her soul. But deep into her young heart something new had been born.

In April the armored ships left the southern drill ground and began to move northward. A destroyer took Selwyn across to the great fortress inside the Virginia capes and left him there. During his stay there was almost constant firing. Later he continued northward as far as Washington, but it was not until June that he telegraphed Austin:

Government satisfied. Appropriation certain next session. Am on my way to New York.

Austin, in his house, which was now dismantled for the summer, telephoned Nina at Silverside that he had been detained and might not be able to grace the festivities which were to consist of a neighborhood dinner to the younger set in honor of Mrs. Gerald. But he said nothing about Selwyn, and Nina did not suspect that her brother's arrival in New York had anything to do with Austin's detention.

As Selwyn came leisurely up the front steps Austin, awaiting him feverishly, hastened to smooth the florid jockey mask over his features and walked into the room, big hand extended, large, bantering voice undisturbed by the tremor of a welcome which filled his heart and came near blinding his eyes:

"So you've stuck the poor old government at last, have you? Took 'em all in—forts, fleet and the marine cavalry?"

"Sure thing," said Selwyn, laughing in the crushing grasp of the big fist. "How are you, Austin? Everybody's in the country, I suppose," glancing around at the linen shrouded furniture. "How is Nina? And the kids? Good business? And Eileen?"

"She's all right," said Austin. "Gad! She's really a superb specimen this summer. Where's your luggage? Oh, is it all here? Enough, I mean, for us to catch a train for Silverside this afternoon?"

"Has Nina any room for me?" asked Selwyn.

"Room! Certainly! I didn't tell her you were coming, because if you hadn't the kids would have been horribly disappointed. She and Eileen are giving a slindy for Gladys—that's Gerald's new acquisition, you know. So if you don't mind butting into a baby show we'll run down. It's only the younger bunch from Hitherwood House and Brookmaster. What do you say, Phil?"

Selwyn said that he would go, hesitating before consenting. A curious feeling of age and grayness had suddenly come over him, a hint of fatigue, of consciousness that much of life lay behind him.

So Austin went to the telephone and called up his house at Silverside, saying that he'd be down that evening with a guest.

Nina got the message just as she had arranged her tables, but woman is born to sorrow and distress to all the unlooked for idioles of man.

"Dear," she said to Eileen, the tears of uxorial vexation drying unshed in her pretty eyes, "Austin has thought fit to seize upon this moment to bring a man down to dinner. So if you are dressed would you kindly see that the tables are rearranged and then telephone somebody to fill in—two girls, you know? The oldest Craig girl might do for one. Beg her mother to let her come."

"Whom is Austin bringing?" Eileen asked.

"He didn't say. Can't you think of a second girl to get? Isn't it vexing? Of course there's nobody left—nobody ever fills in the country. Do you know, I'll be driven into letting Drina sit up with us—for sheer lack of material. I suppose the little map will have a fit if I suggest it and probably perish of indigestion tomorrow."

Eileen laughed. "Oh, Nina, do let Drina come this once! It can't hurt her."

And so it happened that, among the jolly throng which clustered around the little candle lighted tables in the dining room at Silverside, Drina, in ecstasy, curly hair just above the nape of her slim white neck and cheeks like plump fire, sat between Boots and a vacant chair reserved for her tardy father.

For Nina had waited as long as she dared. Then Boots had been summoned to take in Drina and the youthful Craig girl, and, as there were to have been six at a table, at that particular table sat Boots decorously facing Eileen, with the two children on either

hand and two empty chairs flanking Eileen.

At dinner Drina and the younger Craig maiden also appeared to be bent upon self destruction, and Boots' eyes opened wider and wider in sheer amazement at the capacity of woman in embryo for rations sufficient to maintain a small garrison.

"There'll be a couple of reports," he said to himself, with a shudder, "like Selwyn's chaotic, and then there'll be no more Drina and Daisy. Hello!" He broke off, astonished. "Well, upon my word of words! Phil Selwyn, or I'm a broker!"

"Phil!" exclaimed Nina. "Oh, Austin, and you never told us!"

"Train was late, as usual," observed Austin. "Phillip and I don't mean to butt into this very grand function—Hello, Gerald! Hello, Gladys! Where's our obscure corner below the salt, Nina? Oh, over there!"

Selwyn had already caught sight of the table destined for him. A deeper color crept across his bronzed face as he stepped forward, and his firm hand closed over the slim hand offered.

For a moment neither spoke. She could not. He dared not.

Then Drina caught his hands, and Eileen's loosened in his clasp and fell



For a moment neither spoke.

away as the child said distinctly: "I'll kiss you after dinner. It can't be done here, can it, Eileen?"

Selwyn, beside Eileen, had ventured on the formalities, his voice unsteady and not yet his own.

Her loveliness had been a memory. He had supposed he realized it to himself, but the superb fresh beauty of the girl dazzled him. There was a strange new radiance, a living brightness, to her that seemed almost unreal. Exquisitely unreal her voice, too, and the slightly bent head, crowned with the splendor of her hair, and the slowly raised eyes, two deep blue miracles tinged with the hues of paradise.

"Are you remaining to smoke?" asked Eileen as Selwyn took her to the doorway after dinner. "Because if you are not I'll wait for you."

"On the lawn out there—farther out, in the starlight," he whispered, his voice broke, "my darling—"

She bent her head, passing slowly before him, turned, looked back, her answer in her eyes, her lips, in every limb, every line and contour of her, as she stood a moment looking back.

Austin and Boots were talking volubly when he returned to the tables now veiled in a fine haze of aromatic smoke. Gerald stuck close to him, happy, excited, shy by turns. Others came up on every side—young, frank, confident fellows, nice in bearing, of good speech and manner.

And outside waited their pretty partners of the younger set, gossiping in hall, on stairs and veranda in garrulous bevels, all filmy silks and laces and bright eyed expectancy.

The long windows were open to the veranda. Selwyn, with his arm through Gerald's, walked to the railing and looked out across the fragrant starlit waste. And very far away they heard the sea intoning the hymn of the four winds.

Then the elder man withdrew his arm and stood apart for awhile. A little later he descended to the lawn, crossed it and walked straight out into the waste.

The song of the sea was rising now. In the strange little forest below, deep among the trees, elfin lights broke out



He halted to listen.

across the unseen Briar Water, then vanished. He halted to listen. He looked long and steadily into the darkness around him. Suddenly he saw her—a pale blur in the dusk.

"Eileen?"

"Is it you, Phillip?" She stood waiting as he came up through the purple gloom of the moonland, the stars' brilliancy silvering her—waiting—yielding in pallid silence to his arms, crumpled in them, looking into his eyes, dumb, wordless.

Then slowly the pale sacrament changed as the wild rose tint crept into her face. Her arms clung to his shoulders, higher, tightened around his neck. And from her lips she gave into his keeping soul and body, guiltless as God gave it, to have and to hold beyond such incidents as death and the eternity that no man clings to save in the arms of such as she.

THE END.

### NOTICE OF PETITION

Estate of Joseph A. Babcock, deceased, in County Court of Custer County, Nebraska. The State of Nebraska, To all persons interested in said estate, take notice, that a petition has been filed for the appointment of George W. Babcock as administrator of said estate, which has been set for hearing herein, on May 20, 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m. Dated April 29, 1909. A. B. HUMPHREY, County Judge.

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### LEGAL NOTICES

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the County Court of Custer County, Nebraska.  
In the matter of the Estate of William J. Wantz, deceased.  
The State of Nebraska, to Creditors of said Estate:

Take Notice, that I will sit in the County Court Room, in Broken Bow, in Said County, on the 26th day of May 1909, and the 10th day of November 1909, at 10 o'clock a. m., to receive and examine all claims filed and presented against said estate, with a view to their adjustment and allowance; and that on the first date above named the petition of the widow will be heard for homestead, exemptions and allowance, and other statutory rights.

The time limit for the presentation of claims against said estate is six months from the 20 day of April 1909, and the time limited for the payment of debts is one year from said date.  
Dated 4-29-09. A. R. HUMPHREY, County Judge.

#### NOTICE TO NON-RESIDENT DEFENDANT

In the District Court of Custer County, Nebraska.

Oscar M. Eubank vs Jennie L. Eubank, Jennie L. Eubank non-resident defendant: You are hereby notified that on the 14th day of April 1909 Oscar M. Eubank filed a petition against you in the District Court of Custer County, Nebraska, the object and prayer of said petition are to obtain a divorce from you on the grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment in that plaintiff contracted bad disorder, commonly called Gonorrhea from you and inoculated this plaintiff with said loathsome disease without any fault on the part of the plaintiff, plaintiff also charged you having illicit intercourse with parties unknown to this plaintiff. You are hereby required to answer or demur to said petition on the 24th day of May, 1909 and in case you fail to answer or demur your default will be entered and decree rendered according to the prayer of the petition.  
N. T. GADD, Attorney for plaintiff, A 15-M-6-41

#### NOTICE TO NON RESIDENT DEFENDANT

In the District Court of Custer County Nebraska.

Isaac A. Reneau, Plaintiff, vs Wm. H. Ford, Henry Paul, et al., Defendants.  
The defendant, Henry Paul will take notice that on the 14th day of April, 1909, Wm. H. Ford, one of the defendants in the above entitled action filed his answer and Cross-petition in said action in the District Court of Custer County, Nebraska, the object and prayer of which said Cross-petition so filed by the said defendant, Wm. H. Ford against the said defendant, Henry Paul, are, to set aside, vacate and cancel a certain mortgage made by the plaintiff, Isaac A. Reneau and his wife to the said defendant, Henry Paul on the first day of December, 1906 upon the North-west quarter of Section 15, Township 20, Range 20 in Custer County, Nebraska, which mortgage was given to secure the payment of \$1500.00, the same being due and payable on the first day of December, 1911 and drawing interest at the rate of 4 1/2 per cent per annum until paid and which mortgage is recorded in Book 73 at page 496 of the records of Custer County, Nebraska.

Said Cross-petition alleges that at the time said mortgage was made that the defendant, Wm. H. Ford was entitled to said land by virtue of a contract which he had entered into in the early part of 1906 with the then owner of the same, Edward L. Ford, and that under and by virtue of said contract of purchase, the said Wm. H. Ford, at the time of the execution of the said mortgage was in open, notorious, absolute and exclusive possession of said land of which possession the defendant, Henry Paul had notice and was bound to take notice. That said Cross-petition further alleges that the said plaintiff, Isaac A. Reneau had no right or authority to execute said mortgage or to encumber said land for the reason that he well knew that the said defendant, Wm. H. Ford was entitled to the same and was in possession of the same.

You, the said defendant, Henry Paul, are required to answer said petition on or before Monday, the 5th day of May 1909.  
Dated this 14th day of April 1909.

WILLIAM H. FORD,  
By S. A. HOLOGOMB,  
C. L. GUTTERSON,  
Attorneys,  
and A. WALL, his ATTY.

Drink "Blue Ribbon" coffee. Roasted fresh every day. 24-1f.