RICH MENS CHILDREN

By GERALDINE BONNER

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Illustrations by DOM J. LAVIN

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CHAPTER I.

The Bonanza King.

The cold of foot-hill California in the month of January held the night. The occupants of the surrey were too cramped and stiffened by it, and too uncomfortably enwrapped against it, to speak. Silence as complete as that which lay like a spell on the landscape brooded over them. At the last stopping place, Chinese Gulch, a scattering of houses six miles behind them on the mountain road, they had halted at the main saloon, and whisky and water had been passed to the driver and to the burlier figure on the back seat. The watchers that thronged to the saloon door had eyed the third occupant of the carriage with the intent, sheepish curiosity of the isolated man in presence of the stranger female. Afterward, each one was voluble in his impressions of her face, pale in the smoky lamplight, and the hand that slid, small and white, out of its loose glove when the warming glass was offered her.

Since then both she and her companion had leaned back in their several corners and preserved an unbroken silence.

The surrey sped swiftly along the road which wound in spectral pallor over the shoulder of the foot-hill, now dipping into the blackness of a ravine, then creeping up a bare slope, where the horse's hoofs dug in laboriously amid loosened stones. The solemn loneliness of the landscape, faintly revealed by the light of large, clear stars, seemed to find appropriate expression in this frosty, smoke-breathing stillness.

The larger figure on the back seat moved, and turned a face, all of which was hidden save the eyes, toward its companion.

"Hungry?" queried a deep bass voice; the inquiring polysyllable shot out suddenly over an upturned bulwark of collars.

"Fearfully," came the answer in a muffled feminine treble, that suited the more diminutive bulk.

"Get a move on, Jake," to the driver. "This girl's most famished."

"Hold your horses," growled the other man; "we're just about there."

At these words the woman pricked ...

... admirers with a genial good humor, he entered into conversation with them, his manner marked by an easy familiarity, which swept away all shades of embarrassment, and drew the men around the stove, eager to respond to his questions as to the condition and prospects of the locality. The talk was becoming general and animated, when the ancient man returned and announced that the "cold lunch" was ready and to please "step after him into the dining-room."

This gaunt apartment, grimly unadorned and faintly illumined, an occasional lantern backed by a tin reflector projecting a feeble light into its echoing emptiness, was swept of all intruders, and showed a barn-like bareness of wall and loftiness of roof. Lines of tables, uncovered between flanking wooden benches, were arranged down its length. Across the end of one of these a white cloth was spread and three places set. Jake McVeigh, less innocently democratic than the hotel proprietor, was about to withdraw from the society of his distinguished patron and seat himself in seemly loneliness at an adjacent table, when Bill Cannon's voice arrested him.

"What are you going off there for, sonny, as if you were a leper? Come over here and sit side of us."

Cannon, his overcoat removed, was seen to be a powerful, thick-set man, with a bulkiness that was more a matter of broad build and muscular development than fat. His coat set ill upon him and strained at the buttons. It had the effect of having worked up toward the shoulders, noticeable in the clothes of men who are deep-chested and sit bunchily. He had a short neck which he accommodated with a turn-down collar, a gray beard, clipped close to his cheeks and square on the chin, and gray hair, worn rather long and combed sleekly and without parting back from his forehead. In age he was close to seventy, but the alertness and intelligence of a conquering energy and vitality were in his glance, and showed in his movements, deliberate, but sure and full of precision. He spoke little as he ate his dinner, leaning over his plate and responding to the remarks of his ...

"What Are You Going Off There For, Sonny, as If You Were a Leper?"

"And So Your Wife Sent You Up Here to Beg for an Invitation."

PRESIDENT WILSON FOR JUSTICE ONLY

His Inaugural Address Calls on All Honest Men to Aid in His Task.

WILL RESTORE, NOT DESTROY

New Chief Executive Says Change of Government Means the Nation Is Using Democratic Party for Large and Definite Purpose.

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There has been a change of government. It began two years ago, when the house of representatives became Democratic by a decisive majority. It has now been completed. The senate about to assemble will also be Democratic. The offices of president and vice-president have been put into the hands of Democrats. What does the change mean? That is the question that is uppermost in our minds today. That is the question I am going to try to answer, in order, if I may, to interpret the occasion.

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