RICH MENS CHILDREN

By GERALDINE BONNER

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Illustrations by DOM J. LAVIN

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SYNOPSIS.

Bill Cannon, the Arizona king, and his daughter Elsie, the belle of Tucson, visit Governor Hyatt's ball at San Francisco's Tivoli opera house. Introduced to Dominick Byran calls on his mother to find that she has returned to the East. Mrs. Byran refuses the determined old lady's refusal to recognize her daughter-in-law. Dominick Byran, Jr., is born. Dominick Byran, Sr., deserts Dorinda, leaving her several years in penury. She squanders the money he sends her in reckless extravagance, is ostracized by Tucson and the wife-beaters are stoned in at Antelope. Dominick Byran, Jr., is sent to a fashionable preparatory school in Washington, D. C. Antelope is cut off by storm.

CHAPTER V.—Continued.

"I was tired," he said slowly. "I'd worked too hard and I thought the mountains would do me good. I can't get time off at the bank when I want and I thought I'd take a holiday and come up here where I was last summer. I knew the place and liked the hotel. I wanted to get a good way off out of the city and away from my work. As for walking up here that afternoon—I'm very strong and I never thought for a moment such a blizzard was coming down."

He fell into bed and turned toward the window, then raising one hand rubbed it across his forehead and eyes. There was something in the gesture that silenced the young girl. She thought he felt tired and had been talking too much and she was guiltily conscious of her laughter and buoyancy.

They sat without speaking for some moments. Dominick made no attempt to break the silence when she moved noiselessly to the stove and pushed in more wood. His face was turned from her and she thought he had fallen asleep when he suddenly moved and said:

"Isn't it strange that I have never met you before?"

She was relieved. His tone showed neither tenderness nor fatigue, in fact it had the fresh vibration of a return to congenial topics. She determined, however, to be less talkative, less enthusiastic at the weakening exertions of genuine conversation. So she spoke with demure brevity.

"Yes, very. But you were at college for four years, and the year you were back I was in Europe."

He looked at her ruminatingly, and nodded.

"But I've seen you," he said, "at the theater. I was too sick at first to recognize you, but afterward I knew I'd seen you, with your father and your brother Gene."

It was her turn to nod. She thought it best to say nothing, and waited. But his eyes best inquiringly upon her, and the waiting silence seemed to demand a comment. She made the first one that occurred to her.

"Where were you with?"

"My wife," said the young man.

She murmured a vague sentence of comment and this time determined not to speak, no matter how embarrassing the pause became. She spent the time of taking up her book and looking about to where her hand fell. Dominick said:

"Isn't it seems so queer when our parents have been friends for years and I know Gene and you so well, that we never formally introduced."

She drew her hand back and leaned forward, frowning and staring in front of her, and the next moment he was standing by her chair.

"Well, you're sort of notice of events preserved it. When we were little we used to have a row every few places. Agree not when we first came down from Arizona. I think you were only somewhere else, in Sacramento, wasn't you? Then we were at school, and after that you went East to college and I went to Europe, and when you got back from college I was in Europe. Then I was over in Europe and you were in Washington. She was a woman who had a curiously keen interest in the domestic details of life. She had always brought to matters of this character a fine sense of humor, and now that she was a married woman of the world she regarded the topic of jewelry on the human body with a tolerant smile.

"When I had married," he said quietly.

His tone of reserve she answered, stung as if it brought a challenge. She didn't intend to be baffled. She answered with the composure of her self-control.

"Oh, yes, of course," she answered, trying as if to recall a fact that had escaped her memory. "I had forgotten. But I had married Gene."

An hour later when the doctor came back she was kneeling on the floor in the open door of the stove, softly blowing on the embers with a fan. At the sound of the door she looked up and rose to her feet, and the hands being ordered were a matter of fact. She had been a woman who had a curiously keen interest in the domestic details of life. She had always brought to matters of this character a fine sense of humor, and now that she was a married woman of the world she regarded the topic of jewelry on the human body with a tolerant smile.

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