RICH MEN'S CHILDREN

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SYNOPSIS.

Bill Cannon, the Western king, and his daughter, Rose, who had passed up Mrs. Cornelius Rhinelander's invitation to accompany her father across at Antelope, are in New York. Rose has come East for a long visit—chaperon for the wife, and in refused. The determined old lady refuses to be refused. Rose's letters to her father have had been confided to a stenographer, with Herndon Pearson, a stenographer, who has fallen desperately in love with Rose. Since they have frequent opportunities for skips away, Cannon and his daughter are amused by Pearson. In order to get Pearson's photograph, Rose sends him a snapshot and brought to Antelope Pearson arrives and falls in love. Bill Cannon pursues Dominick Sweeney in a gun fight. Dominick escapes by hiding in a paper where Cannon is said wrong, after trying to smooth over difficulties between Rose and Pearson, Bill tells Rose that he has been somewhat generous in their gun fight. He loses temper over bids of Buford, Rose's fiancé, and tells him to get out. Buford's appearance is unexpected and not welcome. Dominick gets letter from wife, Nellie Rose Sweeney, who is visiting her parents in Ireland, and tells Rose about the Irish and Irish customs, father says Nellie and Dominick's explanations. Rose and brother Gene is made manager of Bill's ranch. Rose is to be there for a year. Pearson receives a question to talk with Rose. Dominick writes him.

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

On the Saturday morning she went out betimes. Inquiry at the valley office told her that the train which connected with the branch line to Rocky Bar did not reach the city till noon. So 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 buying almost for dainties that might add a last elaborating touch to the lengthy menu. The afternoon was then dedicated to the solemn rites of manicuring, masticating, and hair-waving at a beauty doctora. On an ordinary occasion these unavowed exertions in the pursuit of good looks would have tired her, but today she was keyed up to a pitch where she did not notice small matters of discomfort.

Long before she was dressed, and sitting half on the mirror in the room she laid on the last perfecting touches with a short stick of hard red cochineal and a circular piece of mosaic looking white stuff, which she rubbed with a moist finger and then used and round her face. Her new dress of raspberry silk crepe hovered over 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 silver ripples; her face, all tones 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 pow dered face.

She was tremulously nervous. Every sound caused her to start and grow to that part of the parlor whence she could look down the long passageway to the first-floor. Large bunches of greenery were massed here in the angles of the bay and stood in the corners of the sitting room. They're filled with violets and roses were set on the table and mantelpiece, and the scent of those flowers, sweet and delicate, mingled with the exotic musky perfume that the woman's draperies exhaled with every movement. At intervals she ran into her bedroom, seized the little, round, soft wad of silk and rubbed it over her face with a quick concentric movement, drawing a fine upper lip down as she did so, which gave to her countenance with that curious even an exceedingly comical expression.

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

"Ah, Dominick," she said in a quiet, un emotional voice, "is that you?"

It was certainly not an enthusiastic greeting. A sensitive woman would have been affronted by it, but Dominick was not sensitive. She had realized from the start that she would probably have to combat the lingering unwillingness left by the quarrel. As Irenic luck ascribed her air of seeming calm to a blasé theory unconscious of any past conflagration, but was not, however, as unconscious of the belief. She noted his heaviness of demeanor, the tired expression of his tired face. He came up the stairs slowly, not yet being completely recovered, and it added to the suspicion of reluctance, of diffidence, of unwilling approach, that seemed to encompass him in an unusual yet definite manner.

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 on the coldness of his cheek, damp with the fogs, and she chilled the nearer and she drew back from him, not as if secretly confident in her dominant, gentler assertiveness. She noted the lights on the shoulder of his coat, drawing them off.

"How are you?" All right?"

Oh, I'm all right," she answered, with brisk, determined sprightliness. "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 alight 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, flushed 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. She led him to the parlor at the top 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 Berry's bravery of silver and glass massed for its adornment. The choice and delicate dinner began with a course that Dominick especially liked, a fact which Berry hoped he would also remember at the first mouthful. He was one of those women who have an unfailing instinct 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 him, she would order nothing but dishes that he did not care for at all, and she was in a more friendly mood, as to-night, she would talk pains and time to arrange a menu composed of those he preferred. He usually did not notice these rewarding attentions, but Berry always thought he did and was "tow stuh fowly" when she expressed or seemed to bestow to show that he was affected by them.

She observed to-night that he ate her remarked, not seemed to relish the food. She made no comments, talking on in a breathless, lively way, but keeping a watchful eye on his dent, and the condition of his feet, which would be made more comfortable recollections connected with the cause of their disfigurement. Her only indication of embarrassment was a tendency to avoid anything like a mu sic of silence in passing from one subject to another. Dominick answered her questions and told her of his wanderings with a slow, careful reluctance. 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 "the holidays," from the time of his walk from Rocky Bar to the day of his departure from Antelope.

Then Berry questioned through the fish to the entree when her questions passed from his personal wanderings and adventures to his associates. She had been very anxious to see to this moment of intimacy he had received from the Cannons 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 pertinent topics more to his taste. Now that he was speaking upon it, inquiring about the snow bound group in Perley's, and awarding to say but the sangest name for which her ears were primed a perfunctory attention

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

it was part of the natural perversity of men that Dominick should put off from it and expend valuable time on the description of the other prisoners.

"There was an actor there," he said, "named on on the way to their ranmeets, a queer-looking chap, but not bad."

"An actor?" said Berry, 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 Saratoga 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 to tell. He was all right, only a bit stagy."

"How should I know whether he was all right or not?" she asked sharply. "That's a very silly question."

Berry was taken aback.

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

Dominick did not answer her. The girl glanced across the table at his face and he motioned it away with an impatient gesture.

Berry, who was not looking at him, went on:

"What kind of clothes did she wear? Any sort of a one's an elegant dresser, gets almost everything from Paris, even her underwear—you can't tell what they were always dark, mostly black and white."

"Did you notice," almost pleadingly, "what she wore when she went out? Mrs. Whiting, the foreslady at Hasel's millinery, says she imported a lot of sables, muff, wrap and hat, for her to take to Reno in. I'd like to see the finest thing of its kind you ever laid your eyes on. Did she have any?"

"I couldn't possibly tell me. I don't think I noticed what she wore. I saw her once with a fur cap on, but I think it belonged to a man. She had a bedraggled skirt on when she was starting there, and used to hold it up hanging to the edge of the rail. It's quite useless asking me about such things. I know nothing about the subject. Did you wind that coconut in the cake, Berry?"

He looked at the clock, a possession of the sitting room, and then at Berry with the manner and sister delighted when his mother and sister delighted him with presents, with costly gifts and in which he had never before displayed any interest.

"Of course, I would," he answered. "I'm awfully fond of coconut. I'm afraid I wound it regularly for nearly three hours."

That brought the subject of Rose Cannon to an end and she did not refer to it again during the dinner. The conversation reverted to such happenings as the King Lear Company in Portland might interest her husband, and it appeared to Berry that he was more pleased to sit and listen to her chatter about her silver, her table decorations, and the shops, than to dilate anything that had happened to him since the snow-bound Sierra.

When dinner was over, they returned to the front of the fat, where they passed the evening in the big ball-room fitted up as a smoking room and den. It was merely a continuation of the hall, and "the cozy corner" which Berry had had a Folk street upholsterer construct in it, occupied the end of the apartment, and crowded such visitors as entered into the impression that he was more than a one-room flat. Dominick sat there with his feet on the fender, and his pipe in his mouth, but their joint possessions in this fine constituted a source of constant wonder to him, the fact that the contracted space was, in reality, large enough to accommodate both the books and the cozy corner, and that Berry decided in favor of the latter. She now seated herself on the other side of the fireplace, opposite to the little construction, and, pilling the pil lows behind her, leaned luxuriously back under the canopy of variegated stuffs which was supported by two furnished-brass rods.

Dominick sat in his easy chair. He always smoked after dinner and read the papers, and presently he picked one up from the floor and began to look them over. The conversation languished. Berry, watching him, finally died away. Berry, leaning back on its elaborate support, looked at him with the fixed attention of one who is interested in the subject