RICH MENS CHILDREN

By GERALDINE BONNER

Author of THE POTTER, TOMORROW TANGLE, etc.

Illustrations by JOHN LAVIN

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SYNOPSIS.

Bill Cannon, the homeless king and his daughter Rose, who had passed up Mrs. Catherine Ryan's hall at San Francisco's Palace hotel, were met by Mrs. Ryan and Dominick Ryan, who was engaged to be a bell hostelrie for his wife, and in the office were Hubert Hall, a rich young man, and her daughter Dorothy, who had just been married into a marriage with Dominick. Hall had been engaged several years to marry Dorothy, and when she eloped with Dominick and left for other ways Hall's friends and relatives are stunned. In at Antelope, Dominick and his bride are met by Mrs. Ryan and taken to the Antelope hotel. Antelope is cut off by storm. Dominick's father, Patrick Ryan, is dead. Rose meets Jackie Dominick in a window in the paper where Dominick is and writes letter telling of his marriage. Rose calls on and is one of the three petrified eliminations, between the hours of two and four, but she would be deeply honored and obliged.

In his "Klondike Monologue" at the Orpheum, Buford, the actor, made a sudden and unexpected hit. The morning after his first appearance, both Dominick and Berry read in the papers that Buford, the actor, had married Miss Rose Cannon, the daughter of Bill Cannon, the millionaire. Dominick was particularly interested in the announcement, for Rose was the girl with whom he and Antelope and was glad to hear that she had married a man in the parlance of his own world, "making good."

Now, from what he heard, Buford's hard times should be at an end. Such a hit as he had made should give him the required footing. Men Dominick knew, who had theatrical affiliations, said that Buford "was made." The actor could now command a good salary in any of the leading companies in the country, and if "he had it he could get a start and climb the ladder toward the heights of legitimate comedy. His performance was unique and brilliant. It was odd, considering the age, that it had not been discovered sooner.

Berry was very anxious to see him and Hazel and Jack, and on the night of the first evenings and pronounced him "simply great." He would keep the promise from Dominick that, at the earliest opportunity, he would send tickets for her, and, if he could not accompany her himself, she could go with one of her sisters.

He stopped to buy the tickets one midday on his way to lunch. He made up his mind to buy three, then Berry could either take her two sisters, or Hazel and Jack, without craving for the theater was an unassessable pastime. He was turning from the ticket office window when a sonorous voice at his elbow arrested him:

"Mr. Ryan," it boomed out, "do I see you at last?"

It was Buford, but a rejuvenated and prosperous Buford, the reflection of the actor Dominick had spoken of as having been snowed in with them at Antelope. Dominick had evidently not expected he would come to San Francisco. He had said the man had been going to an in Sacramento.

As she walked down the street she saw that she was approaching the car line which passed close to her old home. A flush in a window showed her it was nearly five. Hannah would have been home for some time, and Hazel might be expected within an hour. Without a moment's thought she hailed an uptown car.

She found them both at home. Ha sat having been allowed to leave her work an hour earlier than usual, sitting in a small room in the back of the house, they were surrounded by the outward signs of dressmaking. Bits of material lay over the chairs and on a small wooden table, which stood close to her body and upon which portions of the material lay neatly smoothed out. Hannah was cutting with a large pair of shears.

If Berry wanted to surprise her sister, her errand's now had the satisfaction of realizing her hopes. For a moment after she told her news they stared at her, too amazed to speak even Hannah, who had survived difficulties, being completely unprepared for the fact of Lennon nature—for the particular difficulty that had erupted in it. It was Hazel who first spoke:

"Say you off to leave Dominick? Give you money to go away from him, do you mean?"

"That's what I said," returned her sister with fire grimness. "She's made me two offers to leave my husband. wants me to go and, after I've gone for a year, ask him to bring suit for divorce."

My Lord!" murmured Hannah in a hushed voice of horror.

"How much did she offer you?" said Hazel.

The was a crucial question. Berry knew its importance and sat up, pushing back her disarranged hair.

"One hundred thousand dollars," she said calmly.

"A hundred thousand dollars!" gasped Hazel. "Why—why—Berry!"

She stopped, almost trembling in the excitement of her stunned incredulity.

A hundred thousand dollars!" Hannah echoed, each word pronounced with a slow, reflect unbelief. "Oh, I can't be that much!"

"It's that much now," said Berry, her calmness accentuated to the point of nonchalance, "and if I want I can make them double it, raise it to a quarter of a million. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars isn't so much when you've got millions in trunks. What's that to the Ryans?"

She rose abruptly from her seat, pushing it back and feeling that she had better go before she said too much.

As she rose, Hazel rose too, her face full of suspicious concern.

"It's not another woman, is it, Berry?" she almost whispered.

Berry had told so many lies that she did not bother about a few more. Moreover, she was determined not to let her sisters know about Rose Cannon and Dominick.

"No," she said with short scorn, "not another woman. I'd like to tell him I'm not."

When she reached home, she found on the hall table a note which the Chinaman had left her from Buford. It was a messenger. It was from Bill Cannon, and contained but a few lines. These, of a businesslike brevity, expressed the actor's desire to see her again, and politely suggested that, if convenient, she call on him at one of the three petrified eliminations, between the hours of two and four, he would be deeply honored and obliged.

Walking instinctively forward, she crossed Powell Street, and approached the entrance of that home of vaudeville, the Grenada Theater. There had been a recent change of bill, and as she drew near she looked over the posters standing by the entrance on which the program for the coming week was printed in large letters. Mid way down one of these, her eye was caught by a name and she paused and stood reading the words:

"JAMES DEVAY BUFORD
The Witty, Brilliant and Incomparable Monologist
In His Unrivaled Monologue
Entitled
KLONDIKE MEMORIES"

She remembered at once that this was the actor Dominick had spoken of as having been snowed in with them at Antelope. Dominick had evidently not expected he would come to San Francisco. He had said the man had been going to an in Sacramento.

As she walked down the street she saw that she was approaching the car line which passed close to her old home. A flush in a window showed her it was nearly five. Hannah would have been home for some time, and Hazel might be expected within an hour. Without a moment's thought she hailed an uptown car.

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