

# The Younger Set

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS,  
Author of "THE FIGHTING CHANCE," Etc.

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## SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—Returning from Manila, Captain Selwyn, formerly of the army, is welcomed home by his sister, Nina, and her wealthy husband, Austin, and their numerous children. Eileen Erroll, ward of Selwyn and Austin's, is part of their household. Selwyn has been divorced, without guilt on his part, by his wife, Alice, who is now the wife of Jack Rutledge, with whom she has just arrived from Selwyn. Eileen, who is very fond of her brother, Gerald, despite the young man's neglect of her, makes friends with Selwyn.

## Chapter 3

He picked up once more and tightened and knot together the loosened threads which represented the unfinished record that his race had woven into the social fabric of the metropolis was merely an automatic matter for Selwyn.

His own people had always been among the makers of that fabric. Into part of its vast and intricate pattern they had woven an inconspicuously honorable record—chronicles of births and deaths and marriages, a plain memorandum of plain living and upright dealing with their fellow men.

Some public service of modest nature they had performed, not seeking it, not shirking, accomplishing it cleanly when it was intrusted to them.

His forefathers had been, as a rule, professional men—physicians and lawyers. His grandfather died under the walls of Chapultepec castle while twisting a tourniquet for a cursing dragon; an uncle remained indefinitely at Malvern Hill; an only brother at Montauk Point sickened in the trenches before Santiago.

His father's services as division medical officer in Sheridan's cavalry had been perhaps no more devoted, no more loyal than the services of thousands of officers and troopers, and his reward was a pension offer, declined. He practiced until his wife died, then retired to his country home, from which house his daughter Nina was married to Austin Gerard.

Mr. Selwyn, Sr., continued to pay his taxes on his father's house in Tenth street, voted in that district, spent a month every year with the Gerards and judiciously enlarged the family reservation in Greenwood, whither he retired in due time.

The first gun of the Florida keys sent Selwyn's only brother from his law office in hot haste to San Antonio.

That same gun interrupted Selwyn's connection with Neergard & Co., operators in Long Island real estate, and a year later the captaincy offered him in a western volunteer regiment operating on the island of Leyte completed the rupture.

And now he was back again, a chance career ended, with option of picking up the severed threads—his inheritance at the loom—and of retying them, warp and weft, and continuing the pattern according to the designs of the tufted, tinted pile yarn knotted in by his ancestors before him.

Meanwhile he was looking for two things—an apartment and a job—the first energetically combated by his immediate family.

It was rather odd—the scarcity of jobs. Of course Austin offered him one, which Selwyn declined at once, enraging his brother-in-law.

"But what do I know about the investment of trust funds?" demanded Selwyn. "You wouldn't take me if I were not your wife's brother, and that's nepotism."

Austin's harmless fury raged for nearly ten minutes, after which he cheered up, relighted his cigar and resumed his discussion with Selwyn concerning the merits of various boys' schools, the victim in prospective being Billy.

A little later, reverting to the subject of his own enforced idleness, Selwyn said, "I've been on the point of going to see Neergard, but somehow I can't quite bring myself to it—sinking into his office as a rank failure in one profession to ask him if he has any use for me again."

"Stuff and fancy!" growled Gerard. "It's all stuff and fancy about your being any kind of a failure. If you want to resume with that Dutchman, go to him and say so. If you want to invest anything in his Long Island schemes he'll take you in fast enough. He took in Gerald and some twenty thousand!"

"Isn't he very prosperous, Austin?"

"Very—on paper. Long Island farm lands and mortgages on Hampton hen-coops are not fragrant propositions to me. But there's always one more way of making a living after you counted 'em all up on your fingers. If you've any capital to offer Neergard, he won't shrivel for help."

"But isn't suburban property?"

"On the jump? Yes—both ways. Oh, I suppose that Neergard is all right. If he wasn't I wouldn't have permitted Gerald to go into it. Neergard sticks to his commissions and doesn't back his fancy in certified checks. I don't know exactly how he operates. I only know that we find nothing in that sort of thing for our own account. But Fane, Harmon & Co. do. That's their affair too. It's all a matter of taste, I tell you."

Selwyn reflected: "I believe I'd go and see Neergard if I were perfectly sure of my personal sentiments toward him. He's been civil enough to me, of course, but I have always had a curious feeling about Neergard—that he's forever on the edge of doing something—doubtful."

"His business reputation is all right. He shaves the dead line like a safety razor, but he's never yet cut through it. On principle, however, look out for an apple faced Dutchman with a thin nose and no lips. Neither Jew, Yankee nor American stands any chance in a deal with that type of financier. Personally my feeling is this: If I've got to play games with Julius Neergard, I'd prefer to be his partner. And so I told Gerald. By the way—"

Austin checked himself, looked down at his cigar, turned it over and over several times, then continued quietly: "By the way, I suppose Gerald is like other young men of his age and times—immersed in his own affairs—thoughtless perhaps, perhaps a trifle selfish in the cross country gallop after pleasure. I was rather severe with him about his neglect of his sister. He ought to have come here to pay his respects to you too."

"Oh, don't put such notions into his head!"

"Yes, I will," insisted Austin. "However indifferent and thoughtless and selfish he is to other people, he's got to be considerate toward his own family, and I told him so. Have you seen him lately?"

"No-o," admitted Selwyn.

"Not since the first time when he came to do the civil by you?"

"No, but don't—"

"Yes, I will," repeated his brother-in-law, "and I'm going to have a thorough explanation with him and learn what he's up to. He's got to be decent to his sister. He ought to report to me occasionally. That's all there is to it. He has entirely too much liberty, with his bachelor quarters and his junior whippersnapper club and his house parties and his cruises on Neergard's boat!"

He got up, casting his cigar from him, and moved about bulkily, muttering of matters to be regulated, and firmly too.

But Selwyn, looking out of the window across the park, knew perfectly well that young Erroll, now of age, with a small portion of his handsome income at his mercy, was past the regulating stage and beyond the authority of Austin. There was no harm in him. He was simply a joyous, pleasure loving cub, chock full of energetic instincts, good and bad, right and wrong, out of which, formed from the acts which become habits, character matures. This was his estimate of Gerald.

The next morning, riding in the park with Eileen, he found a chance to speak cordially of her brother.

"I've meant to look up Gerald," he said, as though the neglect were his own fault, "but every time something happens to switch me on to another track."

"I'm afraid that I do a great deal of the switching," she said, "don't I? But you've been so nice to me and to the children that—"

Miss Erroll's horse was behaving badly, and for a few moments she became too thoroughly occupied with her mount to finish her sentence.

The belted groom galloped up, prepared for emergencies, and he and Selwyn sat their saddles watching a pretty battle for mastery between a beautiful horse determined to be bad and a very determined young girl who had decided he was going to be good.

Once or twice the excitement of solicitude sent the color flying into Selwyn's temples. The bride path was narrow and stiff with freezing sand, and the trees were too near for such lively maneuvers, but Miss Erroll had made up her mind, and Selwyn already had a humorous idea that this was no light matter. The horse found it serious enough, too, and suddenly concluded to be good. And the pretty scene ended so abruptly that Selwyn laughed aloud as he rejoined her.

"There was a man—Boots Lansing—in Bannard's command. One night on Samar the bolo men rushed us, and Lansing got into the six foot major's boots by mistake—seven leaguers, you know—and his horse bucked him clean out of them."

"Hence his Christian name, I suppose," said the girl. "But why such a story, Captain Selwyn? I believe I stuck to my saddle."

"With both hands," he said cordially, "always alert to plague her, for she was adorable when teased, especially in the beginning of their acquaintance before she had found out that it was a habit of his, and her bright confusion always delighted him into further mischief."

"But I wasn't a bit worried," he continued. "You had him so firmly around the neck. Besides, what horse or man could resist such a pleading air of arms around the neck?"

"What you saw," she said, flushing up, "is exactly the way I shall do any pleading with the two animals you mention."

Later, she remarked, "It's just as Nina says, after all, isn't it?"

"I suppose so," he replied suspiciously. "What?"

"That Gerald isn't really very wicked, but he likes to have us think so. It's a sign of extreme self-consciousness, isn't it," she added innocently, "when a man is afraid that a woman thinks he is very, very good?"

"That," he said, "is the limit. I'm going to ride by myself."

Her pleasure in Selwyn's society had gradually become such genuine pleasure, her confidence in his kindness so unaffectedly sincere, that impulsively she had fallen into something of his manner of badinage—especially since she realized how much amusement he found in her own smiling confusion when unexpectedly assailed. Also, to her surprise, she found that he could be plagued very easily, though she did not quite dare it at first, in view of his impressive years and experience.

But, once goaded to it, she was astonished to find how suddenly it seemed to readjust their personal relations—years and experience falling from his shoulders like a cloak which had concealed a man very nearly her own age, years and experience adding themselves to her, and at least an inch to her stature to redress the balance between them.

It had amused him immensely as he realized the subtle change, and it pleased him, too, because no man of thirty-five cares to be treated like a grandfather by a girl of nineteen, even if she has not yet worn the polish from her first pair of high heeled shoes.

"It's astonishing," he said, "how little respect infirmity and age command in these days."

"I do respect you," she insisted, "especially your infirmity of purpose. You said you were going to ride by yourself. But, do you know, I don't believe you are of a particularly solitary disposition. Are you?"

He laughed at first, then suddenly his face fell.

"Not from choice," he said under his breath. Her quick ear heard, and she turned, semi-serious, questioning him with raised eyebrows.

"Nothing. I was just muttering. I've a villainous habit of muttering mushy nothings—"

"You did say something!"

"No; only ghoulish gabble, the mere murky mouthings of a meager mind."

"You did. It's rude not to repeat it when I ask you."

"I didn't mean to be rude."

"Then repeat what you said to yourself."

"Do you wish me to?" he asked, raising his eyes so gravely that the smile faded from lip and voice when she



Gerald Erroll.

answered: "I beg your pardon, Captain Selwyn. I did not know you were serious."

"Oh, I'm not," he returned lightly. "I'm never serious. No man who soliloquizes can be taken seriously. Don't you know, Miss Erroll, that the crowning absurdity of all tragedy is the soliloquy?"

Her smile became delightfully uncertain. She did not quite understand him, though her instinct warned her that for a second something had menaced their understanding.

Riding forward with him through the crisp sunshine of mid-December, the word "tragedy" still sounding in her ears, her thoughts reverted naturally to the only tragedy besides her own which had ever come very near to her—his own.

Could he have meant that? Did people mention such things after they had happened? Did they not rather conceal them, hide them deeper and deeper with the aid of time and the kindly years for a burial past all recollection?

Troubled, uncomfortably intent on evading every thought or train of ideas evoked, she put her mount to a gallop. But thought kept pace with her.

She was, of course, aware of the situation regarding Selwyn's domestic affairs. She could not very well have been kept long in ignorance of the facts, so Nina had told her carefully, leaving in the young girl's mind only a bewildered sympathy for man and wife whom a dreadful and incomprehensible catastrophe had overtaken, only an impression of something new and fearsome which she had hitherto been unaware of in the world and which was to be added to her small but unhappily growing list of sad and incredible things.

Returning from their gallop Miss Erroll had very little to say. Selwyn, too, was silent and absentminded. She thought of her brother, and the old hurt at his absence on that night throbbled again. Forgive? Yes. But how could she forget it?

"I wish you knew Gerald well," she said impulsively. "He is such a dear fellow, and I think you'd be good for him—and, besides," she hastened to add, with instinctive loyalty lest he misconstrue: "Gerald would be good for you. We were a great deal together—at one time."

He nodded, smilingly attentive.

"Of course when he went away to school it was different," she added. "And then he went to Yale. That was four more years, you see."

"Did he row—your brother Gerald?"

"No," she said. She did not add that he had broken training. That was her own sorrow, to be concealed even from Gerald. "No; he played polo sometimes. He rides beautifully, Captain Selwyn, and he is so clever when he comes to be—at the traps, for example—and—oh—anything. He once swam—oh, dear, I forget. Was it five or fifteen or fifty miles? Is that too far? Do people swim those distances?"

"Some of those distances," replied Selwyn.

"Well, then, Gerald swam some of those distances, and everybody was amazed. I do wish you knew him well."

"I mean to," he said. "I must look him up at his rooms or his club or perhaps at Neergard & Co's."

"Will you do this?" she asked so earnestly that he glanced up surprised.

"Yes," he said, and after a moment, "I'll do it today, I think—this afternoon. Are you having a good time?" he asked condescendingly, but without intention.

"Heavenly! How can you ask that, with every day filled and a chance to decline something every day? If you'd only go to one—just one—of the dances and teas and dinners you'd be able to see for yourself what a good time I am having. I don't know why I should be

so delightfully lucky, but everybody asks me to dance, and every man I meet is particularly nice, and nobody has been very horrid to me—perhaps because I like everybody."

She rode on beside him. They were walking their horses now, and as her silken coated mount paced forward through the sunshine she sat at ease, straight as a slender amazon in her habit, ruddy hair glistening at the nape of her neck, the scarlet of her lips always a vivid contrast to that wonderful unblemished skin of snow.

He thought to himself quite impersonally: "She's a real beauty, that youngster. No wonder they ask her to dance and nobody is horrid. Men are likely enough to go quite mad about her, as Nina predicts. Probably some of 'em have already—that chuckle-headed youth who was there Tuesday gulping up the tea"—And, "What was his name?" he asked aloud.

"Whose name?" she inquired, roused by his voice from smiling retrospection.

"That chuckle-head—the young man who continued to haunt you so persistently when you poured tea for Nina on Tuesday. Of course they all haunted you," he explained politely as she shook her head in sign of noncomprehension, "but there was one who—ah—gulped at his cup."

"Please—you are rather dreadful, aren't you?"

"Yes, so was he. I mean the infatuated childless gentleman whose facial ensemble remotely resembled the features of a pleased and laud lizard of the reptilian period."

"Oh, George Fane! That is particularly disagreeable of you, Captain Selwyn, because his wife has been very nice to me—Rosamund Fane—and she spoke most cordially of you—"

"Which one was she?"

"The Dresden china one. She looks—she simply cannot look as though she were married. It's most amusing, for people always take her for somebody's youngest sister who will be out next winter. Don't you remember seeing her?"

"No, I don't. But there were dozens coming and going every minute whom I didn't know. Still, I behaved well, didn't I?"

"Pretty badly—to Kathleen Lawn, whom you cornered so that she couldn't escape until her mother made her go without any tea."

"Here comes Mr. Fane now with a strikingly pretty girl. How beautifully they are mounted," smilingly returning Fane's salute, "and she—oh, so you do know her, Captain Selwyn? Who is she?"

Crop raised mechanically in dazed salute, Selwyn's light touch on the bride had tightened to a clutch, which brought his horse up sharply.

"What is it?" she asked, drawing the bride in her turn and looking back into his white, stupefied face.

"Pain," he said, unconscious that he spoke. At the same instant the stunned eyes found their focus and found her beside his stirrup, leaning wide from her seat in sweet concern, one gloved hand resting on the pommel of his saddle.

"Are you ill?" she asked. "Shall we dismount? If you feel dizzy, please lean against me."

"I am all right," he said coolly, and as she recovered her seat he set his horse in motion. His face had become

very red now. He looked at her, then beyond her with all the deliberate concentration of aloof indifference.

Confused, conscious that something had happened which she did not comprehend and sensitively aware of the preoccupation which, if it did not ignore her, accepted her presence as of no consequence, she permitted her horse to set his own pace.

Neither self command nor self control was lacking now in Selwyn; he simply was too self absorbed to care what she thought—whether she thought at all. And into his consciousness, throbbing heavily under the rushing reaction from shock, crowded the crude fact that Alice was no longer an apparition evoked in sleeplessness, in silent brooding, in the solitude of crowded avenues and swarming streets; she was an actual presence again in his life.

To be continued.

**BONI'S DEMANDS.**

**Princess De Sagan's Lawyer Exposes Castellane.**

Besides This \$75,000 a Year For the Support of His Three Sons and Debts to Be Paid.

Paris, Dec. 3.—M. Clemenceau, counsel for Princess Anna Gould de Sagan, declared today that Count Boni de Castellane's suit for the custody of his children was a method of blackmail.

He made public the settlement that Count Castellane had offered to withdraw the suit and avert the scandal of his charges against his former wife if certain money conditions were complied with.

These conditions were, it is alleged, \$1,000,000 in cash, \$75,000 a year for the support of the three boys and the payment of the count's most recent debts, which amount to about \$120,000.

M. Clemenceau revealed the exact terms of the settlement Mme. Gould

offered, but which the count refused on the ground that they were insufficient.

These terms were \$200,000 in cash and an income of \$30,000 a year, this income to be increased when the estate of his client was out of the hands of trustees, Mme. Gould to take over all the debts then pending.

M. Clemenceau announced that the princess formally joined with her husband in certain allegations against the count.

These deal with De Sagan's charges that the count to prevent the marriage of Mme. Gould with the prince caused forged documents purporting to have been signed by De Sagan to be sent to Mme. Gould.

These papers were usurers' notes, payable the day the prince was married to Mme. Gould, and three letters alleged to have been written by De Sagan to his mistress, in which he ridiculed Mme. Gould and spoke scurrilously of her.

The count asserted that these documents had been left anonymously at his residence in September, 1907.

De Sagan offered to prove, with the cooperation of his wife, that Count Boni had arranged through two women, called Mme. "G." and Mme. "R." to have them shown to Mme. Gould at her country residence. De Sagan, while indirectly accusing the count of forgery, offered to prove that these documents were forged "by the same hand."

M. Clemenceau said certain affirmations must be met, notably Mme. Gould's alleged remark that it would have been better if she had not been divorced, but had lived as she pleased, though married.

What Mme. Gould actually said, M. Clemenceau declared, was, "I am treated just as if I had a lot of lovers."

He contended that the testimony of the chauffeur discharged by De Sagan and of private detectives was unworthy of credence, and he scored the count for the reckless way he had dissipated his wife's fortune, spending at the rate of \$1,000,000 a year for eleven years.

"So long as this money was forthcoming," M. Clemenceau said, "the count considered his wife upright and honorable." When Miss Anna Gould was married to De Castellane she had a yearly income of \$700,000.

During her married life, with its countless follies, such as the Malakoff palace, \$10,000,000 had been spent. When she got her divorce there were debts of \$3,400,000, in addition to \$95,000 given to the Marquis and Marquise de Castellane.

"This is the man," cried M. Clemenceau, "who wants his children educated like a De Castellane, a man without a profession, who married for money and then devoted himself to betraying his wife with his wife's female friends."

**LEPER WOMAN DIES.**

Widow of General Wardell Succumbs to Terrible Disease.

Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 3.—Mrs. J. C. Wardell, the leper wife of General Wardell, whose case created such a stir in Arizona, died of leprosy in the county hospital.

The case was the most tragic and at the same time one of the most pitiable of its kind ever recorded. Mrs. Wardell, who resided with her husband at Sawtelle, was arrested because of her peculiar actions.

Examination proved her to be a victim of leprosy. Her aged husband refused to leave her. Notwithstanding the fatal nature of her affliction she remained with her in the hospital until he died of cancer and worry.

**NEW PARTNER FOR MORGAN.**

Banker Henry P. Davidson Admitted to Firm.

New York, Dec. 3.—Announcement is made that Henry P. Davidson, vice president of the First National bank, will enter the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co.

Mr. Davidson's admittance as a general partner marks the first important change in the Morgan firm that has taken place since 1901, when George W. Perkins, then vice president of the New York Life Insurance company, became a partner.

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"What is it?" she asked.



COUNT BONI DE CASTELLANE.