The Spoilers. By REX E. BEACH. Copyright, 1905, by Rex E. Beach. [Continued from page 2.] in broke Into rapid speech, allowing r no time for interruption. "I've held back and held back be-Luse I'm no talker. I can't be in my mess. But this is my last chance. and I want to put myself right with you. I've loved you ever since the

Dawson days, not in the way you'd expect from a man of my sort perhaps, but with the kind of love that a woman wants. I never showed my hand, for what was the use? That man outheld me. I'd have quit fare years back only I woul 'n't leave this country as long as you were part of it, and up here I'm only a gambler, fit for nothing

else. I'd made to my mind to let you have him till something happened a couple of months ago, but now it can't go through. I'll have to down him. It isn't concerning you. I'm not a welcher. No, it's a thing I can't talk about-a thing that's made me into a wolf, made me skulk and walk the alleys like a dago. It's put murder into my heart. I've tried to assassinate him. I tried it here last nightbut-I was a gentleman once-till the cards came. He knows the answer now, though, and he's ready for me, so one of us will go out like a candle when we meet. I felt that I had to tell you before I cut him down or before he got me."

"You're talking like a madman. Kid," she replied, "and you mustn't turn against him now. He has troubles enough. I never knew you cared for me. What a tangle it is, to be sure. You love me, I love him, he loves that girl, and she loves a crook. Isn't that tragedy enough without your adding to it? You come at a bad time, too, for I'm half insane. There's something dreadful in the air tonight"-

"I'll have to kill him," the man muttered doggedly, and, plead or reason as she would, she could get nothing from him except those words till at last she turned upon him fiercely.

"You say you love me. Very well, let's see if you do. I know the kind of a man you are, and I know what this feud will mean to him, coming just at this time. Put it aside and I'll marry you."

The gambler rose slowly to his feet. "You do love him, don't you?" She bowed her face, and he winced, but continued: "I wouldn't make you my wife that way. I didn't mean it that way.

At this she laughed bitterly. "Ob, I see. Of course not. How foolish of me to expect it of a man like you. I understand what you mean now, and the bargain will stand just the same, if that is what you came for. I wanted to leave this life and be good,

She recounted the reasons for Helen's along. W adventure, while the man's ." came terrible. "Oh, Kid, I am to blame fo her go. Why did I do it3. " afraid." "The Sign of the Struve, and the felloy rogue." The Brone clock, his eyes bloods. relue those of a goaded, fly "It's 8 o'clock now-ten mile hours. Too late!" "What alls you?" she questioned, baffled by his strange demeanor. "You rum called me the one woman just now, and plain yet"aws .s toward her heavily. H٩ SI :ter." "She lav er? Oh, 1-I'm glad. I'm "Y Jon't stand there like a Ge. glat for you've work to do. 7.001 WOOuc 't you bear? She's in his Wake 's whipped him out o" peril! at he drew himse. his st control. "Get into somewl ! Hurry! My pony your co. "20 will take " She snatched shin chair and held it his garment fro 1 back into his for him while the and ac veins. Together they vi out into light s the storm as she and `ne, snate and as he firing the sadd. ort) skin, she said

"I understand it all now. Yo

.ile the talk about her and Glenister, J. murmur o it's wrong. I lied and schemed and all upon this intrigued against her, but it's over now. guess there's a little streak of good In me somewhere, after all." It right. He spoke to her from the saddle. 'It's more than a streak, Cherry, and you're my kind of people." She smiled wanly back at him under the lantern won. light. "That's left handed, Kid. I don't

want to be your kind. I want to be his kind-or your sister's kind." . . . . . Upon leaving the rendezvous Glenister and his two friends slunk through the night, avoiding the life and lights of the town, while the wind surged out of the voids to seaward, driving its wet burden through their flapping slickers, pelting their faces as though enraged at its failure to wash away the purposes written there. Their course brought them to a cabin at the western outskirts of the city, where the paused long enough to adjust something beneath the brims of their hats.

Past them ran the iron rails of the narrow gauged road which led out



obeyed and engine and a full head or suffer a premat plied mechanics.\*\* efforts two of the till the end

> their lives and . nazought ard of the hills, figue, whether

prime"-

artner's hand.

Jed.

our places, men."

Henister stopped him. "I won't

ild the privilege. Come now-to

They melted away to each side while

A ruther it was me, lad, but if

ibled after the departing shadows,

ging Roy alone. With his naked

ers, Glenister ripped open the

and he loaded them inside his

ide his shirt and every-

.nd cased in an armor one

th part of which could have

im from the face of the earth

y as to leave no trace except.

, a pit ripped out of the moun-

e. He looked to his fuses and

that they were wrapped in oll

ig finished, he set out, walking

a difficulty under the weight he

rbat his choice of location had been

'ell made was evidenced by the fact

hat the ground beneath his feet slop-

d away to a basin out of which bub-

oled a spring. It furnished the drink-

ng supply of the Midas, and he knew

very inch of the crevice it had worn

down the mountain, so felt his way

cautiously along. At the bottom of the

hill where it ran out upon the level it

had worn a considerable ditch through

the soil, and into this he crawled on

hands and knees. His bulging clothes

handicapped him so that his gait was

slow and awkward, while the rain had

swelled the streamlet till it trickled

over his calves and up to his wrists,

chilling him so that his muscles cramp-

ed and his very bones cried out with

it. The sharp schist cut into his palms

till they were shredded and bleeding,

while his knees found every jagged

bit of bedrock over which he dragged

himself. He could not see an arm's

length ahead without rising, and, hav-

ing removed he slicker for greater

freedom of movement, the rain beat

upon his back till he was soaked and

shield him. At last he came to a bridge

of planks spanning the ditch and was

about to rear himself for another look

when he suddenly flattened into the

stream bed, half damming the waters

with his body. It was for this he had

so carefully wrapped his fuses. A man

paused a few paces beyond and accost

ed another, then retraced his steps

over the bridge. Evidently this was

the picket line, so Roy wormed his

way forward till he saw the blacker

blackness of the mine buildings, then

drew himself, dripping, out from the

Since evicting the owners, the receiv-

er had erected substantial houses in

place of the tents he had found on the

mine. They were of frame and corru-

gated iron, sheathed within and suited

to withstand a moderate exposure.

The partners had witnessed the opera-

tion from a distance, but knew nothing

about the buildings from close exami-

nation.

bank. He had run the gantlet safely.

wward between his ribs. Now and

he squatted upon his haunches.

s his eyes to either side. The

then placed them in his hat.

he had room, till he was

wder cases and secreted the contents

upon his person. Each cartridge held

lynamite enough to devastate a vil-

get you-God help 'em!" He

the old prospector paused to wring his

"We've made a we win or lose toms said Dextry. Roy replied, "My 1 is made and "What does that m

"My hardest batt nothing to do with the Midas-Q1 mines of And myself." vil. I fought and il. I fought and a dia dia myself." "Awful wet night for philosophy," the first remarked. "It's ap to sour on lerstorm. you like milk in a th S'pose you put overalls an' D boots on some of them Boston ideas in' lead 'em out where I can look 'em er an'

"I mean that I was a sav; met Helen Chester and she man of me. It took sixty d think she did a good job. 1 wild things just as much as eve., .

I've improved a lot." "Gee, but you're popular with yourself. I don't see as it helps your looks any. You're as homely as ever-an' what good does it do you, after all? She'll marry that big guy."

"I know. That's what rankles, for he's no more worthy of her than I am. She'll do what's right, however, you may depend upon that, and perhaps she'll change him the way she did me. Why, she worked a miracle in my at titude toward life-my manner"-

"Oh, your manners are good enough as they lay," interrupted the other. "You never did eat with your knife." "I don't believe in harakiri," Glenister laughed.

hotels last winter, and, say, you know as much as a horse. Why, you was

A thrill of affection for this place warmed the young man. He loved this old mine. It had realized the dream of his boyhood and had answered the hope he had clung to during his long fight against the northland. It had come to him when he was disheartened, bringing cheer and happiness, and had yielded Itself like a bride. Now it seemed a crime to ravage it. He crept toward the nearest wall and listened. Within was the sound 7-24-tf. of voices, though the windows were dark, showing that the inhabitants were on the alert. Beneath the foundations he made mysterious preparations, then sought out the office building and cook house, doing likewise. He found that back of the seeming repose of the Midas there was a strained expectancy. Although suspense had lengthened the time out of all calculation, he judged he had been gone from his companions at least an hour and that they must be in place by now. If they were not-if anything failed at this eleventh hour-well, those were the fortunes of war. In every enterprise, however carefully planned, there comes a time when chance must take its turn. He made his way inside the blacksmith shop and fumbled for a match. Just as he was about to strike it he heard the swish of oiled clothes passing and waited for some time. Then, igniting his punk and hiding it under his coat, he opened the door to listen. The wind had died down now, and the rain sang musically upon the metal roofs. He ran swiftly from house to house, and, when he had done, at the apices of the triangle he had traced three glowing coals were sputtering. The final bolt was launched at last. He stepped down into the ditch and drew his .45, while to his tautened senses it seemed that the very hills leaned forth in breathless pause, that the rain had ceased and the whole night hushed its thousand voices. He found his lower jaw set so stiffly that the muscles ached. Leveling his weapon at the eaves of the bunk house, he pulled trigger rapidly, the bang, bang. bang, six times repeated, sounding dull and dead beneath the blanket of mist that overhung. A shout sounded behind him, and then the shriek of a Winchester ball close over his head. He turned in time to see another shot stream out of the darkness, where a sentry was firing at the flash of his gun, then bent himself double and plunged down the ditch.

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\*\*\*\*

a volley of gunshots, the thud of bullets and the dwindling whine of spent lead. They leaped from shelter to find themselves girt with a fitful hoop of fire, for the "Stranglers" had spread in the arc of a circle and now emptied their rifles toward the center. The defenders, however, maintained surprising order considering the suddenness of their attack and ran to join the sentries, whose positions could be determined by the nearer flashes. The voice of a man in authority shouted loud commands. No demonstration came from the outer voids, nothing but the wicked streaks that stabbed the darkness. Then suddenly behind McNamara's men the night glared luridly as though a great furnace door had opened and then clanged shut, while with it came a hoarse thudding roar that silenced the rifle play. They saw the cook house disrupt itself and disintegrate into a thousand flying timbers and twisted sheets of tin which soared upward and outward over their heads and into the night. As the rocking hills ceased echoing 1.16-tf. the sound of the vigilantes' rifles recurred like the cracking of dry sticks, then everywhere about the defenders the earth was lashed by falling debris, while the iron roof rang at the fusillade.

#### [Continued next week.] ----

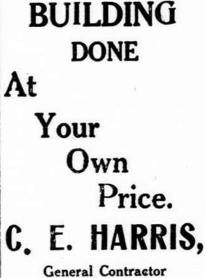
Hereafter we positively refuse to publish any communicaden and felt streamlets cleaving tion received at this office later 9 27 12m. than Tuesday, noon, except local and personal items, which banks were barely high enough to will not be available later than Wednesday, noon, for the current week. By trying to be accommodating we are thrown late every week and we are tired of it. This notice applies to passed over him so close above that he might have touched him. The sentry EVERY BODY.

4-25-tf.

Don't W'ait!

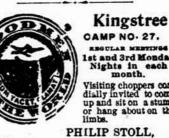
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#### **Registration Notice.**

Theoffice of the Supervisor of Registration will be opened on the first Monday in every month for the pur-pose of the registering of any person who is qualified as follows:

Who shall have been a resident of the State for two years, and of the county one year, and of the polling pre-cinct in which the elector offers to vote four months before the day of election, and shall have paid, six months before, any poll tax then due and payable, and who can both read and write any section of the constitution of 1895 submitted to him by the Supervisors of Registration, or who can show that he owns, and has paid all taxes collectable on during the present year, property in this State assessed at three hundred dollars or J. Y. McGILL, more. Clerk of Board.

Read the Farmers & Merchants Bank's ad. this issue.



find out what they're up to."

I've learned that there are duties a fellow owes to himself and to other people, if he'll only stop and think them out. I've found out, too, that the right thing is usually the hardest to do. Oh,

"No, when it comes to intimacles with decorum, you're right on the job along with any of them easterners. I watched you close at them 'Frisco

to go away and start over and play the game square, but I see it's no use. I'll pay. I know how relentless you re, and the price is low enough. You an have me-and that-marriage talk -I'll not speak of again. I'll stay what I am for his sake.'

"Stop!" cried the Kid. "You're Forong. I'm not that kind of a sport." Its voice broke suddenly, its vehemence shaking his slim body. "Oh, Cherry, I love you the way a man ought to love a woman. It's one of the two good things left in me, and I want to take you away from here where we can both hide from the past, where we can start new, as you .ay.'

"You would marry me?" she asked. "In an hour and give my heart's blood for the privilege, but I can't stop this thing, not even if your own lungs. dear life hung upon it. I must kill that man."

She approached him and laid her arms about his neck, every line of her body pleading, but he refused steadastly, while the sweat stood out upon 's brow.

She begged: "They're all against Kid. He's fighting a hopeless m, f. He laid all he had at that girl's ot, and I'll do the same for you." the man growled savagely. "He got s reward. He took all she had"-'Don't be a fool. I guess I know. ou're a faro dealer, but you haven't y right to talk like that about a good man, even to a bad one like me.". into his dark eyes slowly crept a 2gry look, and she felt him begin to ble the least bit. He undertook to eos, paused, wet his lips, then careilly chose these words:

"Do you mean-that he did not-that ie is a-a good girl?" "Absolutely."

He sat down weakly and passed a haking hand over his face, which had gun to twitch and jerk again as it ad on that night when his vengeance

as thwarted. I may as well tell you that I know 's more than that. She's honest and Ci principled. I don't know why I'm ; this, but it was on my mind I was half distracted when you e. She's in danger tonight, though this minute. I don't dare to think may have happened, for she's Ro verything to make reparation port - nd his friends."

Pytigone to the Sign of the Sled

h Struve." shouted the gambler, leap-

feet. "Alone with Struve on like this?" He shook her crying: "What for? Tell mel

I don't to be his kind.'

across the quaking tundra to the mountains and the mines. Upon this slender trail of steel there rolled one small, ungainly teapot of an engine which daily creaked and clanked back and forth at a snail's pace, screaming and wailing its complaint of the two high loaded flatcars behind. The ties beneath it were spiked to planks laid lengthwise over the semi-liquid roadbed, in places sagging beneath the surface till the humpbacked, short waisted locomotive yawed and reeled and squealed like a drunken fishwife. At night it panted wearily into the board station and there sighed and coughed and hissed away its fatigue as the coals died and the breath relaxed in its

Early to bed and early to rise was perforce the motto of its grimy crew. who lived near by. Tonight they were just retiring when stayed by a summons at their door. The engineer opened it to admit what appeared to his astonished eyes to be a Krupp can-

non propelled by a man in yellow olled clothes and white cotton mask. This weapon assumed the proportions of a great one eyed monster, which stared with baleful fixity at his vitals, giving him a cold and empty feeling. Away back beyond this Cyclops of the Sightless Orb were two other strangers like wise equipped.

The fireman arose from his chair, dropping an empty shoe with a thump; but, being of the west, without cavil or waste of wind he stretched his hands above his head, balancing on one foot to keep his unshod member from the damp floor. He had unbuckled his belt, and now, loosened by the movement, his overalls seemed bent on sinking floorward in an ecstasy of abashment at the intrusion, whereupon with convulsive grip he hugged them to their duty, one hand and foot still elevated as though in the grand hailing sign of some secret order. The other man was new to the ways of the north, so backed to the limit of his quarters, laid both hands protectingly upon his middle and doubled up, remarking fer-

vidlyt "Don't point that damned thing at my stomach."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the fireman, with unnatural loudness. "Have your joke, boys.'

"This ain't no joke," said the foremost figure, its breath bellying out the mask at its mouth. "Sure it is," insisted the shoeless one. "Must be. We ain't got anything

worth stealing." "Get\_into\_your\_clothes\_ and\_ come

wise to them tablewares and pickle forks equal to a head waiter, and it give me confidence just to be with you. remember putting milk and sugar in my consomme the first time. It was pale and in a cup and looked like tea. but not you. No, sir! You savvied plenty and squeezed a lemon into yours, to clean your fingers, I reckon." Roy slapped his partner's wet back, for he was buoyant and elated. The sense of nearing danger pulsed through bim like wine.

"That wasn't just what I meant, but it goes. Say, if we win back our mine, we'll hit for New York next, eh?"

"No, I don't aim to mingle with no higher civilization than I got in 'Frisco. I use that word 'higher' like it was applied to meat. Not that I wouldn't seem apropos. I'm stylish

enough for Fifth avenue or anywheres, but I like the west. Speakin' of modes an' styles, when I get all lit up in that gray woosted suit of mine, I guess I make the jaded sightseers set up an' take notice, eh? Somethin' doin' every minute in the cranin' of necks, what? Nothin' gaudy, but the acme of neatness an' form, as the feller said who sold it to me."

Their common peril brought the friends together again, into that close bond which had been theirs without interruption until this recent change in the younger had led him to choose paths at variance with the old man's ideas; and now they spoke, heart to heart, in the half serious, half jesting ways of old, while beneath each whimsical irony was that mutual love and understanding which had consecrated their partnership.

Arriving at the end of the road, the vigilantes debouched and went into the darkness of the canyon behind their leader, to whom the trails were familfar. He bade them pause finally and gave his last instructions.

"They are on the alert, so you want to be careful. Divide into two parties and close in from both sides, creeping as near to the pickets as possible without discovery. Remember to wait for the last blast. When it comes, cut loose and charge like Sloux. Don't shoot to kill at first, for they're only soldiers and under orders, but if they stand-well, every man must do his work."

Dextry appealed to the dim figures forming the circle.

"I leave it to you, gents, if it ain't better for me to go inside than for the boy. I've had more experience with giant powder, an' I'm so blamed used up an' near gone it wouldn't hurt

With the first impact overhead the men poured forth from their quarters if they did get me, while he's right in armed and bristling to be greeted by

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